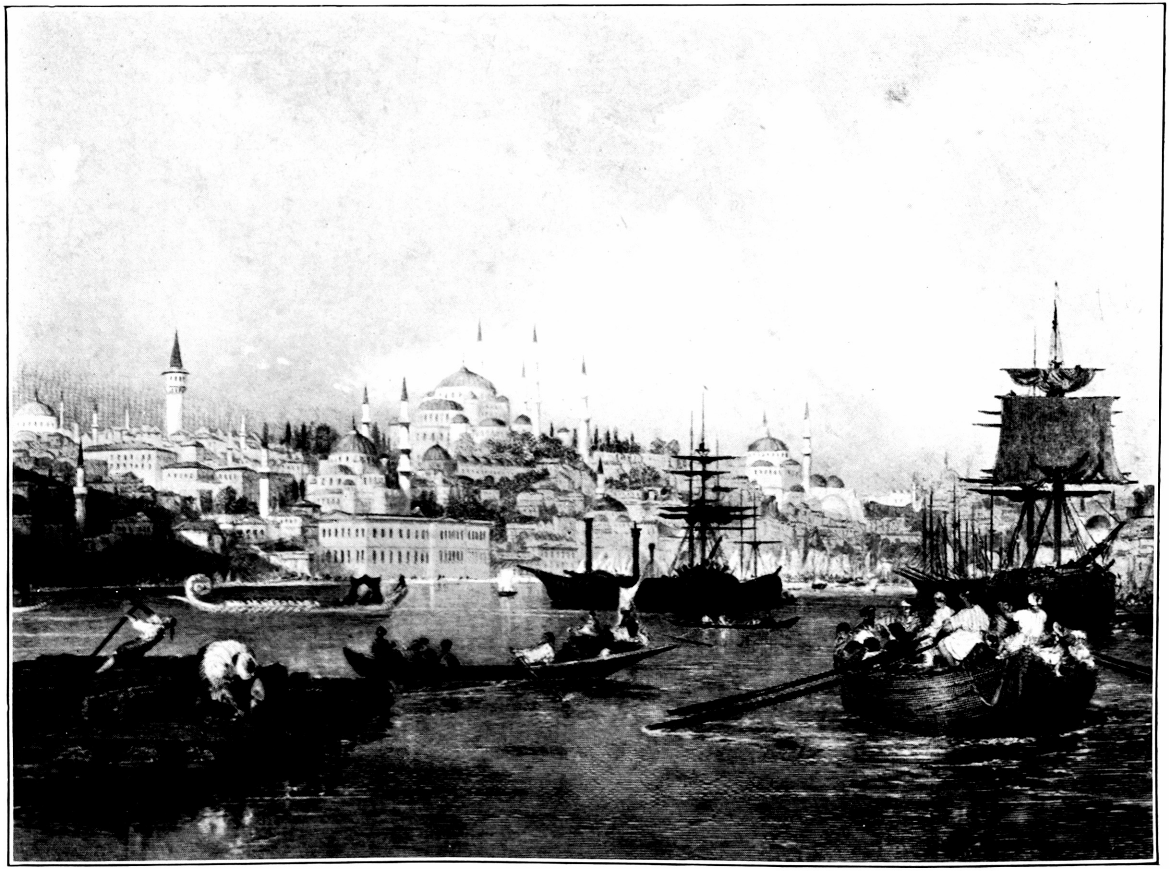
TALES FROM TURKEY



CONSTANTINOPLE: FROM THE ENTRANCE TO THE GOLDEN HORN

Frontispiece

TALES FROM TURKEY

COLLECTED AND DONE INTO ENGLISH

BY ALLAN RAMSAY AND
FRANCIS McCULLAGH

THE FORMER BEING WEARER OF THE FOLLOWING DECORATIONS: THE SECOND ORDER OF OSMANIEH, THE SECOND ORDER OF THE MEDJIDIEH, AND THE GOLD AND SILVER MEDALS FOR MERIT, THE LIAKAT; THE LATTER BEING AUTHOR OF "THE FALL OF ABD-UL-HAMID," "WITH THE COSSACKS," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY THE RUSSIAN ARTIST
M. VENIAMIN PAVLOVICH BIÉLKIN

LONDON
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & CO. LTD.

Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton,
Kent & Co. Ltd.

TO

MRS. ALEXANDER RAMSAY

PREFACE

ALL the tales in the present volume were collected by Mr. Allan Ramsay of Constantinople during a long residence in Turkey, where he was born, and during frequent journeys throughout Asia Minor and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. As one of the Directors of the great Tobacco *Régie* of Turkey, Mr. Ramsay has had to travel much, and has had to mix much on his travels with every class of the Ottoman population, from Pashas to porters.

I might here perhaps add that Mr. Ramsay is, as his name indicates, a Scot of the Scots. His father hailed from Aberdeen, and was employed by the Sultan Abdul-Medjid in the naval arsenal which that progressive monarch established on the Golden Horn. His mother's people were McGregors from the Hielands, and it is perhaps from them that Mr. Ramsay inherited his taste for folk-lore.

The tales were collected orally from the people themselves, whose language Mr. Ramsay understands; and, so far as I am aware, they now form, in the present volume, the largest printed collection of Turkish tales which exists in any language, even in Turkish. Exception must be made, however, of the fairy tales and folk-lore tales which have been translated from the Turkish by Dr. Ignácz Kúnos, the Hungarian. To these, Professor Edward G. Browne has kindly called my attention, but I have not yet had an opportunity of seeing them. I understand, however, that, with a mistaken patriotism, Dr. Kúnos translated them all into

Hungarian. Many of my readers will agree with Sir Charles Elliot (Odysseus), the author of "Turkey in Europe," that, so far as most of us are concerned, he might just as well have left them in the original Turkish. I have heard of some small pamphlets in the vernacular containing various tales about Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín but these also I have never seen, and none of the tales here given are translations from printed books. The famous Mr. George Borrow published at Norwich, it is true, a small collection of tales about Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín. That collection is very small, however, and is now out of print. Moreover, it is very incomplete and inaccurate, Borrow having apparently heard the tales told in Armenian and not in Turkish. As an instance of his inaccuracy I need only mention the fact that the word Khoja is spelt throughout as "Coja" whilst the name Nasr-ud-Dín is never once given.

About half the tales in the present volume appeared originally in New York under the Title of "Told in the Coffee-House. Turkish Tales, collected and done into English by Cyrus Adler, and Allan Ramsay. The Macmillan Company, 1898." My thanks are due to the Macmillan Company for allowing me to publish them in an altered form, also to that distinguished authority on the Semitic languages, Dr. Cyrus Adler, President of the Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, Philadelphia, U.S.A. I might add that this American publication has long been out of print. With one exception, all the tales which it contained had been collected and translated by Mr. Ramsay. That one exception I have omitted from this collection.

I must also thank the *Daily Mirror*, as well as Messrs. Sébah and Joaillier of Constantinople for allowing me to use some of their photographs. I take other illustrations from a century-old book entitled "Fisher's Illustrations of Constantinople" and

from a series of coloured woodcuts bearing the imprint: "Published by R. Bowyer, 80 Pall Mall, 1809." As I shall explain more fully later on, this mixture of the new Turkey with the old in my illustrations suits my purpose, which is to show at the same time the Turkey of which the stories speak, and the Turkey whereof the stories are now narrated. "Fisher's Illustrations" are accompanied by explanatory letterpress from the pen of a Rev. Mr. Walsh, chaplain to the British Embassy at Constantinople; and of this letterpress I have also made use in my own explanations of the pictures which appear in this volume.

"What good purpose will it serve?" is the question sometimes asked about a new book. My answer to it with regard to "Tales from Turkey" is that, even in the British Museum catalogue, there is a gap so far as Ottoman folk-lore is concerned. The folk-lore of Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Scandinavia, and most of the other countries in Europe is dealt with in many publications, but, so far as I can ascertain, Turkish folk-lore has hardly been touched upon at all. Yet a study of it is not uninteresting. We learn from it that the Turk is as great a humorist as the Irishman or the Japanese. At various times during the past half-century, foreign diplomatists at the Sublime Porte have been led, it is true, to entertain a passing but horrible suspicion that the grave Turk was all the time laughing at them in his capacious sleeve. If any of those diplomatists deign to read this book they may be sure that such *was* the case. I should not be surprised, indeed, if it turned out that, in private life, ex-Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid was fond of practical joking. His successor certainly showed himself the possessor of a rich though quiet fund of humour, by the way in which he seized, during the last Balkan War, on most of the booty which had been taken from him by the Bulgarians in the first campaign.

PREFACE

In the popular tales of Turkey we see the mind of the Turkish people as apart from that of their war-lords and mullahs. And we note with surprise that their disposition is peaceful and tolerant. The most militant people in the world astonish us by their love for homely anecdotes with absolutely no warlike flavour whatsoever. The most fanatical people on earth show a fondness for cracking jokes at their own clergy and their own religion, and they betray none of that violent hatred of other religions which their history would have led us to expect. In short it all comes to this, that the plain man everywhere is generally a peaceful individual, interested in births, marriages, deaths, money, land, domestic animals, and such like fundamental things, and losing less sleep over the contemplation of great kings, heroes, and conquerors than those mighty personages are sometimes inclined, perhaps, to imagine. But to me, at any rate, it was at first, I must confess, something of a shock to find the *Turkish* " man in the street " as quiet and humdrum a citizen as any Christian or Buddhist occupying the same humble position. As I have already remarked, the plain man everywhere is, as a rule, " not a bad sort " at all.

It is certainly curious that such a reputedly devout people as the Turks should have as their typical funny man an elder of their ain kirk, a personage corresponding to " the Meenister " in Scotland, the Rural Dean in the Church of England, or the Parish Priest in Ireland. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that those fanatical theologians and hair-splitters, the Arabs, should, as I point out elsewhere, regard the phlegmatic and materialistic Osmanli as being themselves little better than Infidels. In their spirit of religious compromise they resemble, indeed, the English, only that they have never been so intolerant as the latter were until about a century ago. When they captured Constantinople, they permitted the Greek population, the Greek aristocracy, and all the hierarchy

of the Greek Church to remain. They placed a magnificent church at the disposal of the Patriarch, and they employed Greeks almost exclusively as their architects, ambassadors, and Colonial Governors. The Greeks had for a long time a practical monopoly of the two most important offices of Dragoman of the Porte and of the Fleet, as well as of the Hospodarships of Moldavia and Wallachia. In Roumania the whole administration was in Greek hands; and, even in the capital itself, the Patriarch had jurisdiction in civil as well as in religious matters over the members of his own church. Of course this toleration was largely due to the laziness and the inferior civilization of the Turks (admitting for the sake of argument that the Turks had any civilization at all); nevertheless credit, when it is deserved, should not be withheld even from the Unmentionable Ones of Mr. W. E. Gladstone's furious tirades. Imagine Cromwell permitting the Roman Catholic Primate of Ireland to remain in his Palace at Armagh, exercising civil and religious jurisdiction over all Irish Catholics! *

* "The Turkish instinct," says Mr. Sidney Whitman in his recently published "Turkish Memories," "does not run to intolerance, and far less to massacre. There is much kindliness in the Ottoman's nature, as shown alike in his domestic life and by his treatment of the lower animals." And most decisively of all does Mr. Whitman reject the imputation of religious fanaticism:

"The Christian population in Asiatic and European Turkey was protected and enabled to prosper in days when no European public opinion could have possibly intervened on its behalf. While the Turk was thus practising religious tolerance, Jews were burnt at the stake in Christian Spain; the most intelligent portion of the inhabitants of France, the Huguenots, were being persecuted for their faith and driven from their homes by Louis XIV, and in England the penalty of death awaited the priest who dared to say Mass."

From an educated Moslem Mr. Whitman quotes the boast that there is not "a

In other respects, however, and especially in the extraordinary natural sense of discipline which distinguishes both peoples, there is some similarity between the Englishman and the Turk. The latter would probably have, for political reasons, reformed Islâm as the former claims to have reformed Christianity, were it not for the fact that the Turkish Sultans not only defeated the Pope of Mohammedanism on his own soil, but even captured him, and added the spiritual thunders of the Khalifate to their own redoubtable military strength. After that exploit there was, of course, nothing tangible left them to fight for on the field of spiritual supremacy.

"Where," the reader may ask, "are these stories still told?" To say "In the coffee-houses" might not, perhaps, enlighten much some one or two readers whose ideas of coffee-houses are derived from those excellent, but unromantic, institutions which London owes to Sir Joseph Lyons. If a man began telling interminable stories of the Ali Baba order in a Lyons "depot," it is probable that one of the prim waitresses who are such a pleasing feature of those London cafés would icily suggest to him that he had better adjourn to the nearest "pub" in order to continue there his fascinating narrative. And it is doubtful, indeed, if a real, unexpurgated Oriental tale could be told even in a "pub"—that last sad refuge of the immemorial, interminable (and sometimes, alas! intoxicated) story-teller. Of London clubs I sternly refuse to

single line in the whole of our popular literature which could inspire hatred of the Christian." And weight may certainly be claimed for the facts that the wealthiest subjects of the Empire are Greeks and Armenians; that Christians are the owners of probably three-fourths of its real estate; and that all types of Christian worship are practised in Turkey with a freedom that is not to be found, say, in the neighbouring dominions of the Tsar. It was an American missionary in Armenia who said to Mr. Whitman: "If the Russians ever come here, they will turn us missionaries neck and crop out of the country."

speak. The only way to deal with some of the alleged story-tellers who haunt these institutions is with a shot-gun. But no, I am not going to lose my temper by dwelling on this painful aspect of the question. *Revenons à notre* "pub."

I was just saying that not even there is the sacred story-teller always sure of a sympathetic atmosphere. Have I not, O true believers! seen recently with my own eyes in the County Down, near Belfast, a bar over which was hung the following dreadful legend?—"Customers are requested to consume their liquor as quickly as possible, and then to leave. Some people seem to think that their purchase of a small quantity of liquor at the bar entitles them to remain on the premises as long as they like. This is a mistake."

Need I add that the inn-keeper who was guilty of this outrage was an Orangeman and a Covenanter? What other species of Irishman would be capable of even attempting to introduce this base and alien spirit of commercialism and "hustle" into the calm sanctuary of an Irish public-house?

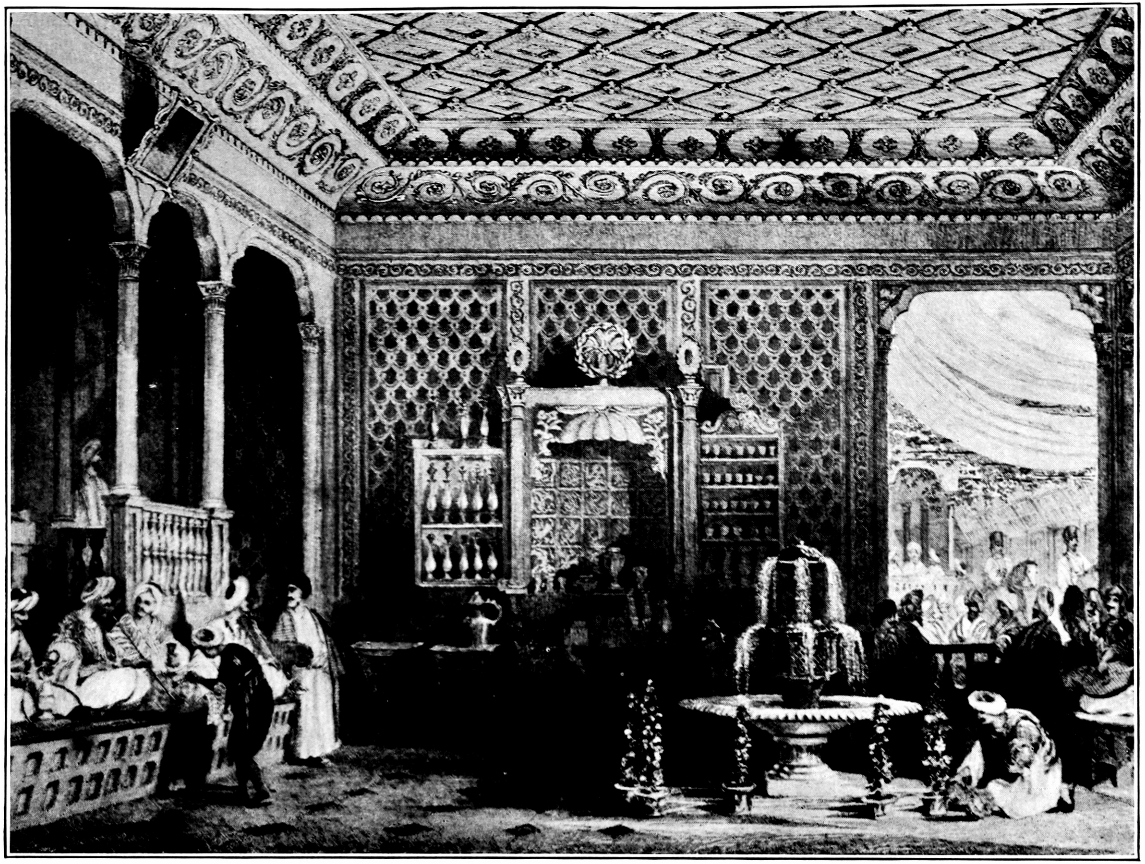
To return, however, to Turkey's "pubs"—namely, the slow and harmless coffee-houses—I have often wondered seriously if most of them are not run by fanatical antiquarians and philanthropists, for how they can be made to pay passes my powers of comprehension. A man buys there a cup of coffee costing less than a halfpenny, and may remain "on the premises" for hours, telling stories or exchanging gossip with the *café-je* (keeper of the café).

There are of course different kinds of cafés, those in Péra being the richest and, from my point of view, the worst. The coffee-houses in the country are generally very bare and uninviting, and sometimes one can get nothing in them save coffee. Bread or any kind of food does not seem to exist so far as these country cafés are concerned. Interpreting literally his own Eastern proverb, "A dish of coffee and a pipe of

tobacco are a complete entertainment," the *café-je* seems to support life exclusively on coffee and tobacco. Probably these lonely cafés are intended more as places where travellers can rest their aching limbs than as places where the inner man can be substantially refreshed. While travelling on horseback in Turkey I have often found the very sight of a coffee-house to be as grateful and comforting as the coffee it sold. Sometimes, tired of jolting in the saddle, and choked with dust, one sees the coffee-house from afar off, quivering in the noon-day heat. The *café-je* welcomes the guest with such a respectful manner and such gracefully turned Oriental phrases that the object of these attentions is half persuaded that for years his arrival has been patiently awaited; that he is a sort of Messiah in that part of the world. As a matter of fact mine host does not know him from Adam.

"*The* effendi (gentleman) is come," says the *café-je* with emphasis to his assistant boy, although he could not possibly have had notice of the arrival beforehand, and could not possibly know anything about this particular effendi. Then comes a very small cup of hot coffee and a large tumbler of delicious, cold, spring water. The traveller uses his own cigarettes as he reclines on the bench; but he does not tell stories as a rule, nor does anybody else. He is too tired to speak or to listen much; and, after having thrown the *café-je* into transports of joy by giving him twopence, he remounts his horse and resumes his journey.

On one occasion while my tired steed and I were struggling long after nightfall to reach a place in Albania a short distance south of the Sandjak of Novi Bazaar, my soldier escort groped his way into a coffee-house of which the entrance was as black as the mouth of Hades. Even inside there was no light save what came from a fire which looked like a baker's oven. I sat down on an earthern couch which I found by



INTERIOR OF A TURKISH CAFFINET, CONSTANTINOPLE

To faee page xiv

touch alone, for it was quite invisible; and to this day I have no idea how many people were in that room, for we stayed there only about five minutes, until ourselves and our horses had rested a bit. Indeed now, as I write this, the idea comes for the first time into my mind that everybody had gone to bed, I mean gone to sleep, in the Oriental fashion, on the floor and all over the place. I certainly remember stumbling several times over invisible bodies which I supposed for a second to be corpses until a stream of lurid objurgations in the Turkish language convinced me of my mistake.

The only occupant of the room whom I could see clearly was an Albanian youth, an assistant *café-je* apparently, who tended the fire and prepared our coffee in the usual *jezvé* or small, brass, long-handled coffee-pot. He had taken off his jacket and moved about noiselessly in the fire-light, barefooted and bareheaded, clad only in a thin singlet and a pair of tight-fitting native trousers. The Albanians are often remarkably graceful and well-formed, and, in his close-fitting dress, this youth might have been a Greek statue come to life and clad in a page's costume of the Plantagenet days. The same opinion was expressed by my travel companion, the well-known novelist and war-correspondent Franz de Jessen, whose skill as a critic of sculpture and painting is very great, and far superior to mine.

It is in such houses—half *han* (inn) and half café—that stories are told on stormy nights, the absence of any light save the glow from the fire adding to the dramatic effect of the narrative. The only drawback, from the European point of view, is that the audience always consists of men. It is nearly as bad as a London club, and the story-teller must miss immensely the soft, mobile faces of women and girls, and the inspiration of their contagious enthusiasms. For the women are always kept apart. So Mohammed decreed, they

say, and, if so, that decree is, methinks, the most fatal obstacle to the durability of the religion which Mohammed taught.

But the best place for the story-teller is the village café, which is regularly frequented by the people of the neighbourhood, by the half-pay officer, the *hamàl* (porter), the khoja, the Jew, the barber, the Turkish bath-man, the cobbler, the lame ex-wrestler, the carpenter, the dervish, the local policeman, the holy but paralytic beggar and the other permanent features of neighbouring society.

The first thing that strikes one about such a café is the remarkably democratic tone which pervades it. You find there officers sitting alongside private soldiers, Mohammedan clergymen listening to the edifying yarns of smugglers, and tailors curdling the blood of professional bandits with tales of terror and mystery.

The café is the public-house of Turkey ; and, though intoxicating liquors are not as a rule drunk there, Moslems sometimes manage to get drunk on coffee. Occasionally you hear a Turkish Bey tell in lugubrious accents of a servant of his who has gone to the bad ; and when you inquire further, you learn that he has gone on a coffee-spree. In other words he spends his whole day in a café talking politics, exchanging gossip with old cronies, and listening to stories—but all the time drinking coffee. He never tastes any spirits, but I am inclined to believe that a prolonged and determined bout of coffee-drinking is worse for the nerves, for the stomach, and for the general health, than a prolonged bout of whisky-drinking. No wonder that in the eighteenth century there arose a number of Turkish Father Mathews who preached a crusade against coffee and tobacco. Their declaration that indulgence in these two luxuries of the East was contrary to the precepts of the Koran led, by the way, to a temporary schism in Islâm and to furious riots in the streets of Stam-



Daily Mirror

A CAFÉ OF THE YOUNG TURKS

To face page xvii

boul. And, long before that time, the learned Abd'alkâder Mohammed al Ansâri had written a whole book about coffee, whose lawfulness he maintained, though an Englishman, Mr. George Sale, one of the translators of the Koran, declared that "the fumes of it (coffee) have some effect on the imagination;" adding "this drink . . . has been the occasion of great disputes and disorders, having been sometimes publicly condemned and forbidden, and again declared lawful and allowed." There have even been disputes about tobacco, but the more religious make a scruple of taking the latter, "not only because it inebriates" (I am again quoting Mr. Sale), "but also out of respect to a traditional saying of their prophet (which, if it could be made out to be his, would prove him a prophet indeed), 'That in the latter days there should be men who should bear the name of Moslems, but should not be really such; and that they should smoke a certain weed, which should be called Tobacco.'"

Stay-at-home Englishmen have sometimes thought that I was joking when I talked of coffee-drunkenness in Turkey, but the vice is not unknown elsewhere. I do not mean to say that a party of our hilarious English "nuts" would be likely to make a night of it at one of Sir Joseph Lyons' cafés over cups of "our own celebrated blend of Mocha." In fact I can quite figure to myself the withering glance of contempt which any real "nut" would bestow on me if I even suggested the possibility of such a cheap, unusual, and dilatory *jamboree.* I fully realize that such a slow spree is not at all suitable to the genius of the cycling, motoring, aeroplaning West. But on the other hand I will maintain that it is eminently suitable to the land of the sedate, slow-stepping camel, of the wise and deliberate elephant.

A man given to excessive coffee-drinking is known in Turkey as a tirïâkî, a word which means literally a *devoué* or

enthusiast, and is generally applied to one addicted to the excessive use of opium, tobacco, or spirits. It is not an impolite word, however, like sar-kosh (drunkard), which is a term of contempt.

The tirïâkî stupefies himself with innumerable cups of coffee ; and, like the common or public-house drunkard, he recklessly squanders his substance on his beloved "tipple." A friend of mine once employed a Turkish coachman named Ali, who was so fervent a tirïâkî that he spent on coffee all his monthly wage of eighteen Turkish pounds a month,—one hundred and eighty-nine English pounds sterling a year. Ali never staggered, but he always seemed to be more or less stupefied, and his eye continually wandered. When he fell once off his box, it became clear to the employer that Ali's services could no longer be utilized with safety to his master, to the coachman himself and to the public. Ali was accordingly discharged, and he seems to have lived ever since in his favourite café, quaffing cup after cup of the *café-je's* best and darkest infusion.

But even here in the West I have seen old lady teetotalers who probably indulge in more coffee-drinking and tea-drinking than is good for them. And I remember once reading, in an authentic account of a wreck, how some English sailors, who had to their horror found themselves stranded on a desert island with a whole cargo of coffee and not a single bottle of whisky, used very strong coffee in order to produce in themselves some of the effects which alcohol would have produced.

Far be it from me, however, to blame any old lady for coffee-drinking or even for tea-drinking, much less to blame her husband for dram-drinking. The drinking of coffee or of whisky, the smoking of tobacco or of opium, are all alike evidences of a profound, philosophic disgust with the injustice of the world and the cynicism of fate. This divine discontent

acts in different ways on different religions and different races and different men. It makes one man go on strike. It makes another man (being a Cabinet Minister) "go for" dukes. In Siam it causes a European to "go native." In Japan it incites a householder to "go inkyo"—in other words to abdicate, resign his position as head of the family, make over all his property to his heir and become as one legally dead. In India it leads to a respectable citizen divesting himself of every stitch of clothing and becoming a naked fakir. In Hyde Park it makes a man become a Socialist orator with a red tie. In Mongolia it makes men enter monasteries, and take to opium and prayer. Far be it from me, I say, to blame any of these persons. On the contrary I respect all of them equally, for I can perfectly well understand what drove them to it. Occasionally I feel myself as if I could take at one and the same time to each and all of the desperate courses above mentioned, and I daresay that some of my readers could say the same.

The Stamboul coffee-house is also a capital place wherein to hear old Turkish folk-tales, though I am told that the telling of those tales is now ceasing in Old Stamboul itself, and all over Turkey. Even in the remotest parts of the Ottoman Empire the modern spirit of hurry and unrest is breaking in rudely on the ancient calm of the immemorial East, with the result that the modern Turk has no time for story-telling or for story-hearing. This is still another reason for the collection and publication of these tales while they are still told or, at all events, still remembered. If we wait any longer the only yarns we shall hear in the Oriental coffee-houses will be yarns about golf.

In some of the Stamboul cafés, however, the old tales about kalîfs and pashas and prophets are still narrated, greatly to the delight and advantage of the young British Consular officials who have passed through the very efficient hands of Professor

Edward G. Browne of Cambridge. The café is as useful to the young student interpreter in Constantinople as the story-teller's hall is useful to the young-student interpreter in Tokio: long may both of these admirable institutions flourish! I understand that Professor Browne always advises his young men to live in Stamboul and not in Péra (the fashionable European quarter), to get rooms in a thoroughly Turkish *han*, and to pass their evenings discussing folk-lore with grave and pious khojas, ulemas, hamàls, and mullahs. This is undoubtedly the right way to learn the Turkish language and to understand the Turkish mind: better far than to spend one's leisure playing Auction Bridge in Levantine French at the *Club de Constantinople*. Moreover, it is intensely interesting and instructive, for in a Stamboul café one meets with a greater variety of Oriental character, and samples a richer blend of fiction than would be possible in a country coffee-house.

Unfortunately, it must be admitted that the Turkish café has, like the Turkish bath and the Turkish Empire, degenerated enormously in the land of its birth during the last hundred years. As will be seen from one of the pictures reproduced in this book, the old Turkish café was a very gorgeous edifice, supported on pillars and open in front. According to the description given of it about a century ago by the Rev. Robert Walsh, chaplain to the British Embassy at the Ottoman Porte, it was surrounded on the inside by a raised platform, covered with mats or cushions, on which the Turks sat cross-legged. On one side were musicians, generally Greeks, with mandolins and tambourines, accompanying singers who shouted rather than sang. On the opposite side were men, generally of a respectable class, some of them to be found there every day and all day long, dozing under the double influence of coffee and tobacco. The coffee was and is served in very small cups, not larger than egg-cups, grounds

and all, without cream or sugar, and so black and thick that it has been compared by disgusted English visitors to "stewed soot." Besides the ordinary chibook or long Germanic pipe for tobacco, there is another implement called nargileh used for the same purpose. Known to Englishmen generally as a "hubble-bubble," it consists of a glass vase, filled with water, and often scented with distilled roses or other flowers. This is surmounted with a silver or brazen head from which issues a long, flexible tube. A pipe-bowl is placed on the top, and is so constructed that the smoke is drawn bubbling, cool and fragrant, through the water.

In the centre of the old-fashioned Turkish café there used to be an artificial fountain, which in summer was always kept playing, and always surrounded by vases of flowers and piles of the sweet-scented melons of Cassaba. The melons were placed there in order that they might be kept cool, and that they might add by their odour to the fragrance of the flowers.

In the old days of the gorgeous coffee-houses, a *medâk* or professional story-teller was frequently employed by the *café-je* to entertain his guests. In order to accommodate the increased company that visited the house on these occasions, stools were placed in semicircles in the street before the café and the refreshments were sent from the house. A small platform was laid on the open window, so that the people within and without might all hear and see. On this platform the *medâk* mounted and continued his tales till far into the night. We reproduce in this book a picture of the olden story-teller seated on his throne. The excellence of those olden story-tellers was admitted by the most cultured Europeans who lived in Constantinople at the beginning of the last century, and who were, owing to their knowledge of the Turkish language, in a good position to judge. The Turkish *medâks* of that time were said to equal the best European actors. Nor were they

devoid of a keen business sense of the kind which is shown by the astute magazine editor who breaks off a story at just the most interesting point with the cold phrase, "To be continued in our next." When the attention of his audience was excited to the highest degree at the approach of some dire calamity to the hero, or some other crisis in the tale, the *medâk* used to stop short with an abruptness suggestive of sudden decapitation. Then he descended from his platform—and solemnly went round with the hat. The most celebrated of these *medâks* in the last century was a man called Kiz Achmet, who was such a capital story-teller that the Sultan often sent for him to entertain the ladies of his harem. Achmet's stories, like those of all his confrères, are described as being "of a very coarse and indelicate character." Yet he was nicknamed Kiz Achmet or "Achmet the Girl," perhaps, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, because his stories were so flagrantly unsuitable for the young lady of fifteen. This indelicacy also accounts in all probability for the fact that the great majority of these "Turkish Nights" have been lost to posterity. Had they been less coarse they would doubtless have been translated by European scholars and formed into a collection rivalling the immortal collection of Arabic tales. But it was apparently agreed that two sets of unexpurgated "Arabian Nights" would be more than the conscience of the world could stand.

Some of those old Turkish tales were actually taken, indeed, from the "Arabian Nights" (the old *jinns* having had no copyright apparently, despite their extensive and peculiar power in other directions); and all of them greatly resembled the masterpieces of Arabistân. Sometimes the corruption of a kadi was detailed with considerable humour. Sometimes a Turkish proverb was illustrated, and formed, as it were, the text of the tale. Among the proverbs thus illustrated and

dramatized were the following. "A man cannot carry two melons under one arm." "Though your enemy be no bigger than an ant, suppose him as large as an elephant." "Though the tongue has no bones, it breaks many bones."

The *meddâk* introduced individuals of all the multitudinous sects and nations which were to be found inside the Turkish Empire, and imitated with admirable precision the language of each. But he was particularly fond of introducing the Jews, whose imperfect pronunciation of every language save (presumably) their own, presented him with a happy subject for caricature. Not, indeed, that he forgot the Christians. The imitation by Turkish performers of the bad Turkish spoken by Greeks, Armenians, Albanians, Franks, and others is a perennial source of merriment to the Osmanli and, according to one English scholar who did know Turkish, "a very salutary discipline for any foreigner who thinks he has mastered the Osmanli language."

But why not, let me ask before I go further, why not have similar story-tellers' halls in England? Why not have the living story-teller instead of the lifeless printed page? Why not hark back to our own ancient history or repair to that source of all wisdom, the tranquil and immemorial East, for a hint anent the establishment of a new source of popular instruction and amusement? This new departure would probably be denounced by the oculists as taking the bread out of their mouths, but on the other hand it might save the eyesight of future generations. For undoubtedly we use our eyes too much for purposes of instruction and amusement, and our ears too little. What are those places miscalled "music"-halls but traps for the eye? Almost all our knowledge of history and fiction comes to us through the eye. One can hardly ever travel in England by train or omnibus without seeing people whose eyes are glued to some cheap work of

fiction. Indeed I have quite frequently noticed messenger-boys absorbed in "penny dreadfuls" while traversing like somnambulists the perilous streets of our great metropolis.

The departure which I suggest would relieve the pressure on the optic nerve, and restore to our people some of that skill in artistic, well-told, and full-bodied anecdote which went out with the stage-coaches and the coffee-houses of the Restoration.

Why, I say, should not some enterprising and philanthropic Company (Limited) open story-tellers' halls where, after half an hour of Marie Corelli, (on the principle of "Ladies first"), Mr. Hall Caine would trip lightly on to the scene? Other establishments, catering for a different public, might engage (regardless of expense) the services of Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, Mr. Wells and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In still other halls, foreign novelists and native bards might hold forth.

The scheme which I faintly adumbrate would be of benefit even to the novelists themselves. They would be in touch with the great heart of the Public, face to face with their readers, able to see their magnetic spell actually work. They would know how such-and-such an incident would "go down." Lastly, they would have a new source of income. Publishers also would be benefited, as they could easily ascertain who was drawing the biggest houses and who was attracting, on the other hand, the greatest number of rotten eggs. The modern novelists may think that their position under these circumstances would be undignified. Nothing of the kind. Shakespeare was in that position; and I feel sure that Mr. George Bernard Shaw, Mr. Chesterton, and possibly Mr. Belloc would eagerly welcome such a scheme for keeping themselves before the public. One of our greatest novelists has already, in "The Hand of Ethelberta" described his heroine as putting just such a scheme into execution on her own account. He

was unaware, I take it, that a similar system is actually working in Japan at the present moment. I hasten to add that, in cases where an author is shy, it would be easy to find a trained story-teller to do the work for him just as a trained actor serves as interpreter for the dramatist.

As a result of this scheme our people would learn to enjoy the rich savour of certain words and would learn the lost art of telling a story with effect. The only stories one now hears in England (this storied land of the Canterbury Tales) are bald, curt, inartistic and incredible yarns about golf, motoring records, and gigantic trout. They would learn, moreover, to render correctly (and this can never be done on paper) the various dialects which are spoken in these islands, and the various ways in which the English language is murdered by strangers. The intelligent foreigner—who, like the poor, is always with us—would get a chance of learning our language in all its niceties and in all its finer shades of expression. What is more to the point, however, the native himself would get a chance of learning his own language. Moreover, the native would enjoy his fiction more, for half of a story is lost when it is only told on paper. One misses the facial play of the artist who tells it. One loses those subtle inflections of the voice which cannot be rendered in print.

To return, however, to the Turkish café, all its glory is now a thing of the past. To find a gorgeous café or a gorgeous Turkish bath-house, you must go to Berlin or Vienna or Paris or New York, for in Stamboul you will find neither the one nor the other. Constantinople is very far removed, indeed, as Gautier points out, from the splendour of *le café turc au boulevard du Temple*, from "*cette magnificence d'arcs en cœur, de colonnettes, de miroirs et d'œufs d'autruche.*"

And the professional story-teller is also a thing of the past, though oddly enough, this species of artist still flourishes

in Japan, where one of the most celebrated story-tellers is an Englishman called Black who was brought to Yokohama by his parents at a very early age. All the stories that one hears now in a Turkish café are told by the guests themselves or by the proprietor, just as the lofty Johnsonian conversation in the Cheshire Cheese used, before it changed hands a few years ago, to be carried on for the benefit of American visitors by the publican himself and his brother. The *café-je* now adds shaving and hair-dressing to his other occupation, just as the English publican is sometimes reduced to the dismal extremity of adding "hot coffee" or "cut from the joint and two vegetables, 10*d.*" to the faded attractions of his bar. But on the other hand the coffee-house keeper has become more loquacious since he has blossomed out as a barber, and this loquaciousness stands him in good stead when he lays aside the razor and assumes the rôle of story-teller.

His coffee-house is, as a rule, a tawdry, tumble-down place, consisting usually of little more than one large, barn-like room, with walls made to a large extent (if I may use the expression), of small panes of glass. The furniture consists of a tripod with a contrivance for holding the kettle, and a fire to keep the water boiling. A carpeted bench or divan traverses the entire length of the room and is usually occupied by grave, turbaned or fezzed Turks, their legs folded under them. They smoke nargilehs ("hubble-bubbles") or chibooks (both of which are supplied by the house, being too heavy to be carried about by the guests); but cigarettes are now becoming more common here as everywhere else. Their sole drink is coffee, A few of them will engage in a game of *Tavla* or backgammon, but the majority enter into conversation, at first only in monosyllables, which gradually swell, however, to the dignity of a general discussion. Finally some sage of the neighbourhood comes in and the company appeals to him to settle the point at

issue. This he usually does by telling them a story to illustrate his opinion. As I have already pointed out, some of those stories are adaptations from the Arabic. Many of them come from the Persian; but in most cases the Turkish mind gives them a new setting and a peculiar philosophy. They are therefore characteristic of Turkish habits, customs, and methods of life, and they seem for this reason to be worthy of preservation.

In Péra and also in Stamboul, near the Sublime Porte, there are a number of what are called up-to-date Europeanized cafés, with *café à la Turque* it is true, but also, alas! with marble-topped tables, mirrors, cane-bottomed chairs and—gramophones! These are largely frequented by Greeks, Armenians, Western Europeans, and Young Turks. I reproduce a photograph of a typical café of this kind, which was taken in Constantinople during the recent war by a correspondent of the *Daily Mirror*. Unfortunately there is no coffee *en évidence* in that photograph, probably because the Young Turk politicians represented therein are too much occupied with their newspapers—with the *Sabah*, the *Yeni Gazette*, the *Osmanli*, the *Jeune Turc*, the *Ikdam*, the *Hillal*, the *Hakikat*, the *Mizan*, &c. In the Grande Rue de Péra there is a very large and very European café owned by an Armenian called Tokatlian, after whom it is named. This place is worth a book in itself, for it is always thronged with military officers, newspaper correspondents, Greek and Armenian reporters employed by the said correspondents, spies, politicians, smugglers, deputies, and all kinds of ladies except Turkish ladies. It is really an important political centre, is Tokatlian's; but it does not concern me here. I should like to mention, however, that farther down the Grande Rue is a Greek café where a chorus of Hellenic youths, mounted on a raised platform, sing every evening a selection of Greek

songs to the accompaniment of native instruments of music. But the curious cafés of Constantinople (good alliterative title for a book, that!) must entice me no further, otherwise I should go on to describe the Albanian cafés in Galata, the Persian cafés in Stamboul, and many other queer places where queer people smoke the tobacco of Kavala and imbibe the infusion of the Arabian berry. I might be tempted to describe the café which is situated between Seraï-Burnu and the Yeni-Jami mosque, which is not only celebrated for its marble fountain, but also for the swallows which build their nests year after year in the lofty ceiling. I might describe the café near the Tekké of the dancing Dervishes in Péra, which is frequented mostly by Frenchmen and Armenians. Then, at Beshiktash, on the European side of the Bosphorus, is a picturesque café which is shaded by trees, and washed by the rapid current and cooled by the breezes from the Black Sea. Another, situated near the *scala* or landing-place of Yeni-Jami, is frequented almost only by sailors. Lastly, a café near the Old Bridge, at Oun-Kapan on the Golden Horn, is mostly frequented by the Greeks of Phanar. One goes to it in a caïque, and from its balcony one watches a scene to which it would be difficult for any painter to do justice. But I must not allow the subject of Constantinopolitan cafés to entice me further, otherwise there will be no room left in this book for the Turkish tales to which it is supposed to be exclusively devoted.

If you go to the right sort of café in Stamboul, you meet pilgrims from Mecca nearly as hot in their fanaticism as Orangemen after the Twelth of July Parade. You meet dealers in precious stones, carpet-merchants from Ispahan, carpet-baggers seeking election to Parliament, Arab Sheikhs from Arabia Deserta, Berbers from the Sus, Moors from Tangier, Afghans, Pathans,—" Parthians and Medes and Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia and in Judæa and

Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia in Egypt and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes."

To taste the full flavour of the following tales one must imagine oneself among "that pentecostal crew." The great thing in the Oriental tale is the atmosphere; and it is in order to create the necessary atmosphere that I make this preface so long, and that I illustrate this book so fully with typical Turkish pictures.

For I have a theory, O ye of understanding! that tales of this kind should be copiously illustrated not only with scenes from the life described in the tales, but also with scenes from the life amid which the stories are told. To hear them by word of mouth in Turkey is the best thing possible. Failing that, the next best thing is to listen to them in a Stamboul which has been brought to England by means of photographs and pictures.

In Turkey the *meddâk* does not need to draw attention to the mosques, the turbaned khojas, the scribes, the bullock-carts, the Triple Walls, the ruins of antiquity. All of these things are before the eyes of his auditors as he speaks. Now, a book like this has its circulation chiefly in British homes. It is read in English trains, seaside resorts, and other places where there is no Oriental atmosphere to speak of. The editor cannot alter the tales himself in order to impart "atmosphere." He does not enjoy in this matter the privilege of the historian, the poet and the writer of fiction. Hence the necessity of his copiously illustrating his collection with pictures of the scenes amid which his stories are laid. And even if, in the present instance, some of the pictures do not seem to be connected very closely with the text which they are supposed to illustrate, they may still attain their object—which is to produce the proper "atmosphere." Some of the

pictures in this volume need no explanation, but others represent scenes that are less well known. In such cases we have added short explanations placed in such a way as not to interfere with the flow of the narrative. The reader who may be disposed to criticize this arrangement must remember that, even in a Stamboul café, the Turks who listen to humorous tales about their khojas have, before their eyes, or at all events at the back of their minds, visions of Santa Sofia, the Bosphorus, the Marmora, the great peaceful cemeteries on the Asiatic shore. Sometimes, it is true, my illustrations, instead of helping the reader to a better comprehension of the text, are in striking contrast to the text. The tale is that of the simple Anatolian shepherd; the illustration recalls the mighty and complex civilizations of Rome and Byzantium. But this very want of harmony is in accordance with facts, for often the Osmanli strike us as primitive, unsophisticated and almost pathetic figures, moving unwittingly against a mighty background of tremendous memories. I frequently think of them ruling in Constantinople as I would think of Eskimaux ruling in London. Suppose that the diversion of the Gulf Stream (which Allah forfend !) and the return of the Ice Age led to England's occupation by the tribes of the frozen North. Imagine these tribes sitting on the plinth of Nelson's pillar and the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral without knowing or caring what those monuments were meant to represent. Imagine them ignorant of the fact that the ground beneath them was honeycombed with subterranean passages. Imagine them erecting their ice-houses in Parliament Square and telling each other, under the shadow of the Clock Tower, not stories of Asquith and Carson, but funny and primitive yarns about penguins, whales, reindeer, and polar bears. The parallel is not inapt, for the Turks know nothing of the Burnt Column and the other invaluable relics of a past

civilization with which their city abounds; and for hundreds of years they knew naught of the vast subterranean halls which existed underneath their very feet in Stamboul. For further information on this latter point, the reader should turn to my explanation of the picture entitled *Yéré-Batan-Seraï* (*The Subterranean Palace*) which appears in the story of "Chapkin Halid."

With the same object in view, that is, in order to produce the proper atmosphere, I occasionally make use of Turkish words and phrases, for there are Turkish or Arabic words which are as indispensable in a Turkish story as mosques, fezzes, chibouks, turbans, camels and latticed harem windows are indispensable in a typical Turkish picture. In almost all cases where I use these Turkish words I give the English translation as well, but it would be no harm to give here a few of the more necessary words.

Aleikum sélâm!	And on you be peace! (response between Mussulmans only).
Allah Akbar!	God is great!
Allah bereket versin!	May God give you abundance! (Thank God!)
Allah râzy olsun!	May God be pleased or content with you!
Allah-â êsmarladik!	Adieu!
Allah-â teshekkur ederim	I thank God (Thanks).
Allah'-en yardim elâ	With God's help.
Bi'-Allah!	By God!
Bi'-smi'-llah!	In the name of Allah!
Bourun!	Welcome!
Chibook.	Pipe with long stem.
Dervish	Mendicant monk.

Effendi	Gentleman, sir.
Ev-Allah	Thanks (I thank God).
Evvet, Effendim	Yes, sir.
Fez	The characteristic Turkish red cap (formerly made in Fez, Morocco).
Han	Inn.
Helwa	A Turkish sweet made only in winter.
Imam	Head of a religious community.
In-shâ-Allah !	If it please God !
Jin or jinn	Evil spirit.
Kadi	Judge.
Kismet	Fate.
Lira	Gold piece, value about 18*s.* 6*d.*
Lokma	Turkish sweetmeat.
Mâshâ'llâh !	As God pleases !
Medâk	Professional Turkish story-teller.
Mézé	*Hors d'œuvre.*
Padishah	Sultan.
Piaster or Piastre	Silver piece, value about 2¼*d.*
Pilaf	Rice (the national dish).
Qah'védji or Café-je	Maker of coffee.
Sélâm !	Peace !
Sélâm aleikum !	Peace be on you ! (Salutation between Mussulmans only.)
Sheikh	Chief of Dervishes, Master.
Softa	Student of religious law.
Turbeh	Tomb.
Vali	Governor of a province.
Vezir	Prime Minister.



THE MEDAK, OR EASTERN STORY-TELLER, CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page xxxii

PREFACE

It will be noticed that a few of the following tales are not legendary tales, or indeed, tales of any kind but simply sketches of contemporary or recent life in Turkey. These are easily distinguished, however, from the folk-stories, and I have not, therefore, thought it worth while to put them in a section by themselves. I had no hesitation, however, in adding them to the present collection. They are true,—that is, of course, a serious charge against them;—but in spite of that I consider that they are all, at the same time, typical fragments of Turkish life or else accounts of remarkable and characteristic men like Sheikh Assiferi of Latakieh, who are well remembered by people still alive but whose rough histories have already become transmuted into the pure gold of popular legend.

Not that the stories here collected are all pure gold, even in my opinion. Some of them have, indeed, no glitter at all, so far as I can see (though of course I hope that the reader will perceive it). But even this absence of glitter is of interest testifying as it does, like the inscription "Made in Turkey," to fabrication by the somewhat rude and unskilful Osmanli. For the Turks are stolid and inartistic. They have neither the gorgeous imagination of the Arabs nor the extraordinarily flexible, complex, and subtle mentality of the mystical Persian.

Not all the tales, however, are of Turkish origin. At least one of them, "The Thirteenth Son" is of Armenian authorship, while others seem to be Jewish. The great bulk of them are, however, Turkish of Turkey, and I flatter myself that they smack strongly of their native soil.

There are, of course, other tales than Turkish in Constantinople and in the isles of the Archipelago. The Greek tales of Stamboul would alone constitute a bulky volume—a volume which, by the by, the editors of the present collection may yet present to the public.

But for the moment I have got to consider the stories on which I am at present engaged, and the voice of conscience reminds me that those stories will inevitably be crowded out unless I bring this already overgrown preface to an end. Not that it is a preface—really. It should, I suppose, be entitled "The Preliminary Discourse" or, better still, "Musings without Method." I do not, however, apologize for either its length or its excursiveness. On the contrary when I come to die and am interrogated in the tomb by Muker and Nekir, the terrible angels of the Inquisition, regarding the good actions (if any) which I have done during my earthly life, I shall point with modest satisfaction to the fact that I have not only invented a new form of preface but have even introduced the novelty of illustrating it. This invention is entirely due to my pity for overworked reviewers who, as is well known among the enlightened, seldom get beyond the preface which, on the other, however, is caviare to the general.

Therefore I take leave of you O my readers, O company of genii and men, with a fervent *Allah bereket versin!* (May Allah give you abundance!) also a solemn *Selámin aleikum!* (Peace be on you!) and likewise a sincere *Allaha esmarladeq!* (Good-bye!)

FRANCIS McCULLAGH.

36 Lincoln's Inn Fields,
London, W.C.
August 1914.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE RUSSIAN ARTIST
M. VENIAMIN PAVLOVICH BIÉLKIN

جهانی خواجه نصر الدّین قدر آثاری گولدردی
بو وادیلرده طبعم یی روانی ایلــدی خندان

Why should they not invoke God's wrath thereon when mentioning the heart?
Its doings, like to Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín's, the folk incite to smile

THE HUMOROUS GHAZELS OF SURÚRI

STORIES ABOUT HANOUMS
[TURKISH LADIES]

STORIES ABOUT HANOUMS [TURKISH LADIES]

How the Farmer Cured his Wife
The Hanoum and the Unjust Kadi
What Happened to Hadji
Hier-sis Tchechmé, "The Blessingless Fountain"



INTERIOR OF A HAREM, CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page 3

HOW THE FARMER CURED HIS WIFE

THERE once lived a farmer who understood the language of animals. He had obtained this knowledge on condition that he would never reveal its possession, and with the further provision that should he ever prove false to his oath, the penalty would be certain death.

One day he chanced to overhear a conversation between his ox and his horse. The ox had just come in from a hard day's work in the rain.

"Oh," sighed the ox, looking over to the horse, "how fortunate you are to have been born a horse and not an ox. When the weather is bad you are kept in the stable, well fed, groomed every morning, and caressed every evening. Oh that I were a horse!"

"What you say is true," replied the horse, in a judicial tone, "but you are very stupid to work so hard."

"You do not know what it is to be goaded with a spear and howled at, or you would not accuse me of being stupid to work so hard," replied the ox.

"Then why don't you feign illness?" asked the horse.

On the following day the ox determined to try this deceit, but he was stung with remorse when he saw the horse led out to take his place at the plough. In the evening, when the horse was brought to the stable very tired, the ox sympathized

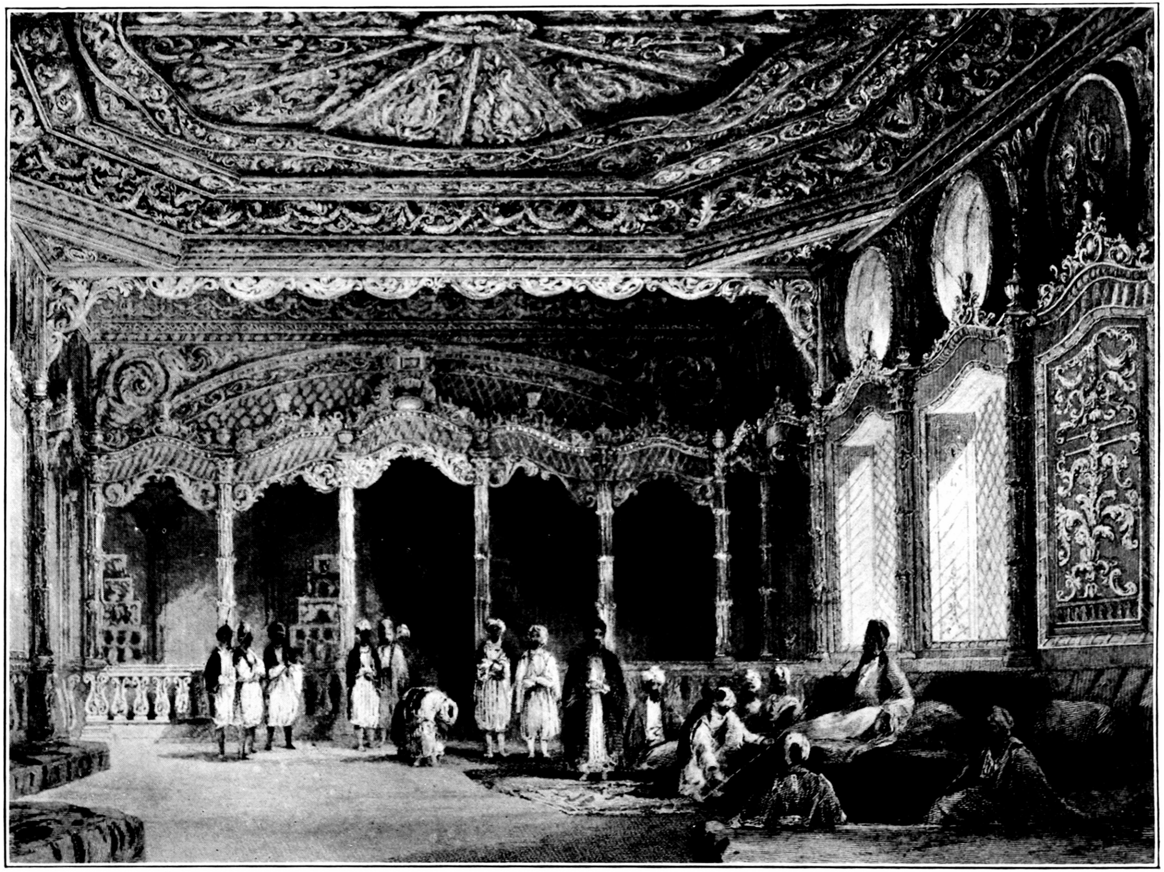
with him, and regretted that he himself was the cause of that tiredness. But at the same time he could not help expressing his astonishment at the horse for working so hard.

"Ah, my friend, I *had* to work hard," answered the horse. "I can't bear the whip; the thought of its hideous crack! crack! makes me shiver even now."

"But leaving that aside, my poor horned friend," proceeded the horse, "I am now most anxious for you. I heard the master say to-night that if you are not well in the morning, the butcher will come and slaughter you."

"You need not worry about me, friend horse," said the ox, "as I much prefer the yoke to chewing the cud of self-reproach."

At this point the farmer left the animals and entered his home, smiling as he did so at his own craft in re-establishing, if not contentment, at least resignation to their fate, among the occupants of his stable. Meeting his wife, she at once inquired as to the cause of his happy smile. He put her off, first with one excuse, then with another, but to no purpose: the more he protested, the stronger her inquisitiveness grew. Her unsatisfied curiosity at length made her ill. The endeavours of the numerous doctors brought to her assistance were as futile as the incantations of the witches from far and near, and as powerless to remove the spell as were the amulets, the charms, and the abracadabras composed and written by holy men. Her unsatisfied curiosity gnawed at her very vitals, and she visibly pined away. The poor farmer was distracted; and, rather than see her die, he at last decided to tell her his secret, and thus forfeit his own life in order to save hers. Deeply dejected, for no man quits this planet without a pang, he sat at the window gazing for the last time, as he thought, on the familiar surroundings. Of a sudden he noticed his favourite chanticleer, followed by his numerous harem, sadly



APARTMENT IN THE PALACE OF EYOUB, THE RESIDENCE OF ASMÈ SULTANA, CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page 5

walking about without his accustomed strut, only allowing his favourites to eat the morsels he discovered, and ruthlessly driving the others away. To one of those "others" he said: "Allaha Teshekkur ederim [Thanks be to God] I am not like our poor master, to be ruled by one of you or even by a score of you. He, poor man, will die to-day for revealing his secret knowledge to save his wife's life."
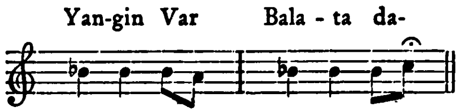
"What is the secret knowledge?" asked one of the wives; whereupon chanticleer flew at her and pecked her mercilessly, saying after each vigorous peck, "That's the secret; and if our master only treated the mistress as I treat you, he would not need to give up his life to-day."

And, as if maddened at the thought, he pecked them all in turn. The master, seeing and appreciating the effects of this cure from the window, went to his wife and treated her in precisely the same manner. And this effected what neither doctors, sages, nor holy men could do—it completely cured her.

THE HANOUM AND THE UNJUST KADI

THE chöpdji (dustman) and the bekdji (night watchman) are the most important and necessary servants of a Turkish quarter. The bekdji receives a monthly salary from the big houses of five piastres, and from small houses of two and a half piastres; and as a rule the chöpdji receives the same, but sometimes he gets less than the bekdji. The latter is the individual who calls out in a loud, melancholy, and far-resounding voice, "Yangin Var!" ("There is a fire") to announce the outbreak of a fire in any part of Constantinople or its suburbs.

"Yangin Var!" sounds somewhat like this—



This cry is not unmusical, especially if one happens to own some uninhabitable but heavily insured houses in the street where the fire is raging. But, as a rule, considering the terrible conflagrations which have devastated Stamboul, it is a cry which causes panic.

The brave bekdji runs very swiftly, yelling all the time at the top of his voice, and always taking care to give the name of the place where the conflagration has occurred. This he does so that kindly hearted people may go and loot
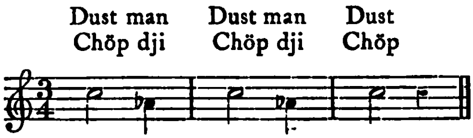
the houses which are supposed to be on fire, but which very often are not on fire at all. Foreigners have sometimes the greatest difficulty in keeping those would-be "rescuers" out of their houses on such an occasion; and, even if there is a fire, they always prefer the fire to the firemen. The latter are scantily clad, run swiftly, and remind one very much of those bare-limbed, lightly clad youths whom one sometimes sees practising for a race by running after night-fall around Lincoln's Inn Fields and other London squares. They carry with them on their shoulders a most exiguous and antiquated fire-engine, looking like a big squirt and quite unsuited for putting out an ordinary kitchen-fire, much less a conflagration. The men chant some weird chant as they race along, and the first time I saw them I was convinced that they constituted a religious procession carrying the Ark of the Covenant, the Beard of the Prophet, or some such holy relic. And, to crown all, they have a curious theory that sea-water will not extinguish flames,—a theory which has led to the loss of more than one splendid palace washed by the very waters of the Bosphorus.

Despite the fact that he is such an unmitigated nuisance, the bekdji annually bothers the neighbourhood for a "tip." The "festive season" which he chooses for this infliction is the feast of the Shaiker Baïram, the three days feast following Ramazan or Ramadan, the annual Mohammedan fast of thirty days or one lunar month, when it is the custom for all the Turks to exchange presents of sweetmeats. At this time both the chöpdji and the bekdji call at each of the houses in their quarter to wish their victims a happy New Year, and to offer them some Baïram sweets. They each carry a tray of sweets and say, "May your Baïram be happy!" ("*Baïramlariniz Moubarek Oulsoun!*") In reality, however, their object is to receive their annual Backsheesh, or Baïram present.

I am told that similar customs are not quite unknown in England at Christmas-time.

It was, and still is in some parts of Constantinople, the custom of the refuse-gatherer or chöpdji to go about the streets with a basket on his back, and a wooden shovel in his hand, calling out: "Refuse removed! Refuse removed! Refuse!"

These words do not lend themselves very well to poetry; and, indeed, some English lady tourists who were once ravished by this melancholy call of a good-looking young chöpdji were shocked when the cry was translated for them. Yet, for all that, those words constitute quite a musical street cry, something like this—



Now it came to pass that a certain chöpdji had, in the course of five years of assiduous labour, amassed the not unimportant sum of five hundred piastres. He was afraid to keep this money by him; so, hearing the kadi of Stamboul highly and reverently spoken of, he decided to entrust his hard-earned savings to the kadi's keeping.

Going to the kadi, he said: "Oh learned and righteous man, for five long years have I laboured, carrying the dregs and dross of rich and poor alike, and I have saved a sum of five hundred piastres. With the help of Allah, in another two years, I shall have saved a further sum of at least one hundred piastres, when, *Inshallah!* I shall return to my country and clasp my wife and children in my arms again. In the meantime you will grant a boon to your slave, if you will consent to keep this money for me until the time for my departure has come."

The kadi replied: "Thou hast done well, my son. I swear by the solemn oath of divorce that this money will be kept faithfully and returned unto thee when required." *

The poor chöpdji departed, well satisfied. But after a very short time he learned that several of his friends were about to return to their memleket (province) and he decided to join them, thinking that his five hundred piastres were ample for the time being. "Besides," said he, "who knows what may or may not happen in the next two years?" So he decided to depart with his friends at once.

He went to the kadi, explained that he had changed his mind, that he was going to leave for his country immediately, and asked for his money. The kadi called him a dog and ordered him to be whipped out of the place by his servants. Alas! what could the poor chöpdji do? He wept in impotent despair, as he counted the number of years he must yet work before he beheld his loved ones.

One day, while removing the refuse from the konak of a wealthy pasha, his soul uttered a sigh which reached the ears of the hanoum, and from the window she asked him why he sighed so deeply. He replied that he sighed for something that could in no way interest her. The hanoum's sympathy

* This is one of the most solemn forms of oath known to the Mohammedans. The person taking it says, "I impose upon myself divorce from my wife." Considering, however, that a Turk may have many wives, the calamity thus invoked does not seem to a Christian to be necessarily and always so very awful—for the husband. I am inclined to suspect that, though monogamy is the rule in the United Kingdom, there is in this realm more than one married man who would not violently object to the adoption of such a form of promissory oath in the British Law Courts. And on bachelors (in Turkey an unknown class among men who are over sixteen years of age) this oath would have no effect whatsoever. The administration of it in their case would be like the pouring of water on a duck's back.

was excited, however; and finally, with tears in his eyes, the chöpdji consented, after much coaxing, to tell her of his great misfortune. The hanoum thought for a few minutes and then told him to go the following day to the kadi at a certain hour and again ask for the money as if nothing had happened.

The hanoum in the meantime gathered together a quantity of jewellery, to the value of several hundred pounds, and, instructing her favourite and confidential female slave to come with her to the kadi, she told her to remain outside whilst she went in. She also told the slave that when she saw the chöpdji come out with his money, she, the slave, was to enter the kadi's room hurriedly and to say to her mistress,—"Your husband has arrived from Egypt, and is waiting for you at the konak."

The hanoum then went to the kadi, carrying in her hand a bag containing the jewellery. With a profound salaam she said:

"Oh, kadi, my husband, who is in Egypt and who has been there for several years, has at last asked me to come and join him there. These jewels are, however, of great value, and I hesitate to take them with me on so long and dangerous a journey. If you would kindly consent to keep them for me until my return, I will think of you with lifelong gratitude. And in case I never return, you may keep them in token of my esteem."

The hanoum then began displaying the rich jewellery. Just at that moment the chöpdji entered, and, bending low, said:

"Oh, master, your slave has come for his savings in order that he may proceed to his country."

"Ah! welcome!" said the kadi, "So you are going already!" And immediately he ordered the treasurer to pay the five hundred piastres to the chöpdji.

"You see," said the kadi to the hanoum, "what confidence the people have in me. This money I have held for some time without receipt or acknowledgment; but directly it is asked for it is paid."

No sooner had the chöpdji gone out of the door, than the hanoum's slave came rushing in: "Hanoum effendi! hanoum effendi!" she cried, "your husband has arrived from Egypt, and is anxiously awaiting you at the konak."

On hearing this, the hanoum, in well-feigned excitement, gathered up her jewellery, and, wishing the kadi a thousand years of happiness, departed.

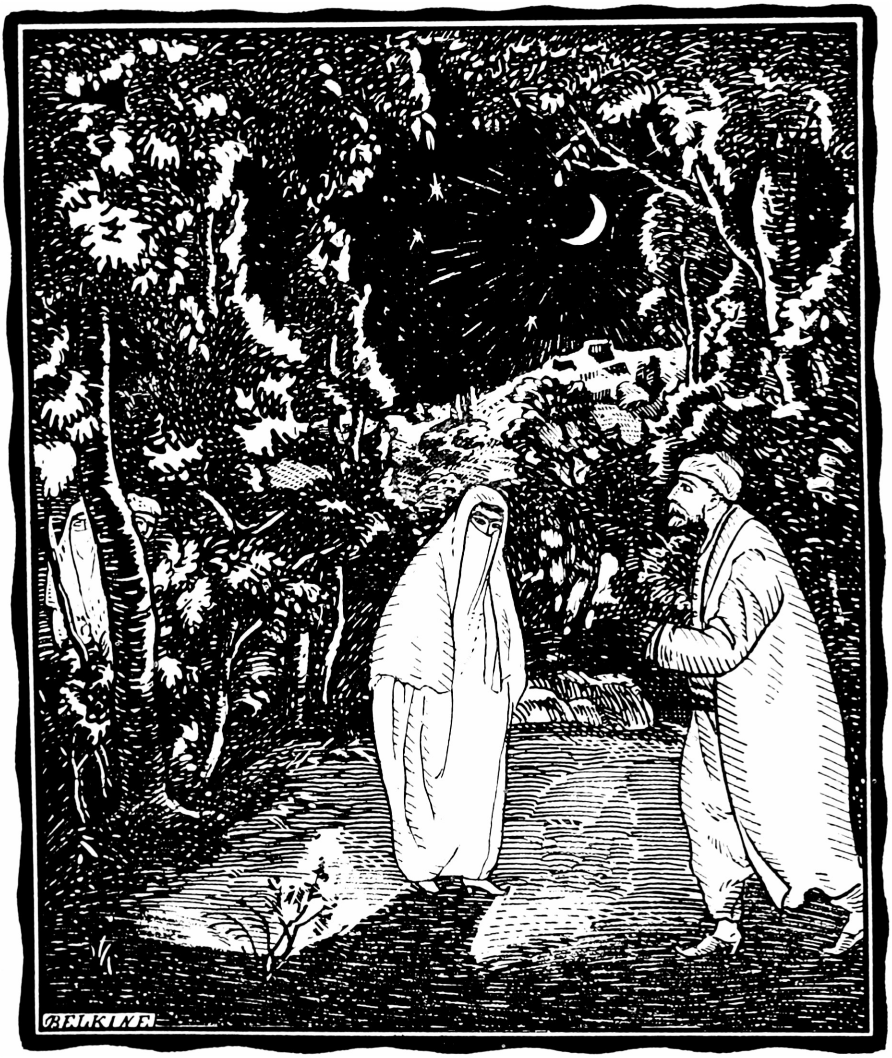
The kadi was thunderstruck, and, caressing his beard with grave affection, thoughtfully said to it: "For forty years have I been a judge, but never before, by Allah, has a cause been pleaded here in this fashion."

WHAT HAPPENED TO HADJI

HADJI was a merchant in the Great Bazaar of Stamboul. Being a pious Mohammedan, he was of course a married man, but even Turkish married men are not invulnerable to the charms of women who are not their legal wives. It happened one day, when possibly the engrossing power of his lawful wife's influence was feeble upon him, that a charming hanoum came to his shop to purchase some spices. After the departure of his fair visitor, Hadji, do what he might, could not drive her image from his mind's eye or her attractive influence from his heart. Furthermore, he was greatly puzzled by a tiny black bag containing twelve grains of wheat, which the hanoum had evidently forgotten.

Till a late hour that night did Hadji remain in his shop, in the hope that either the hanoum or one of her servants would come for the bag, and thus give him the means of seeing her again, or at least of learning where she lived. But Hadji was doomed to disappointment; and, much preoccupied, he returned to his house. There he sat, plunged in thought, unresponsive to his wife's conversation, and no doubt making mental comparisons between her and his visitor.

Hadji remained downcast day after day, and at last, giving way to the entreaties of his wife, who implored him to let her share his troubles, he frankly told her what had happened, and admitted that ever since that fatal day his soul had been in bondage to the fair unknown.



HADJI AND HIS CHARMER

To face page 12

"Oh, husband," replied his wife, "and do you not understand what that black bag containing the twelve grains of wheat means?"

"Alas! no," replied Hadji.

"Why, my husband, it is plain; plain as if it had been told. She lives in the Wheat Market, at house No. 12, with a black door."

Much excited, Hadji rushed off and found that there was a No. 12 in the Wheat Market, with a black door, so he promptly knocked. The door opened, and whom should he behold but the lady in question? Instead of speaking to him, however, she threw a basin of water out into the street and then shut the door. Hadji did not know what to think of this. Mingled with feelings of gratitude to his wife for having so accurately directed him, there was some natural surprise and resentment at his strange reception. Having lingered about the doorway for a time he at length returned home. He greeted his wife more pleasantly than he had done for many days, and told her of his adventure.

"Why," said his wife, "don't you understand what the basin of water thrown out of the door means?"

"Alas! no," said Hadji.

"Veyh! Veyh! (an exclamation of pity) it means that at the back of the house there is a running stream, and that you must go to her that way."

Off rushed Hadji and found that his wife was right; there *was* a running stream at the back of the house, so he knocked at the back door. The hanoum, however, instead of opening it, came to the window, showed a mirror, reversed it, and then disappeared. Hadji lingered at the back of the house for a long time, but, seeing no further sign of life, he returned to his own home much dejected. On entering the door-way, his wife greeted him with: "Well, was it not as I told you?"

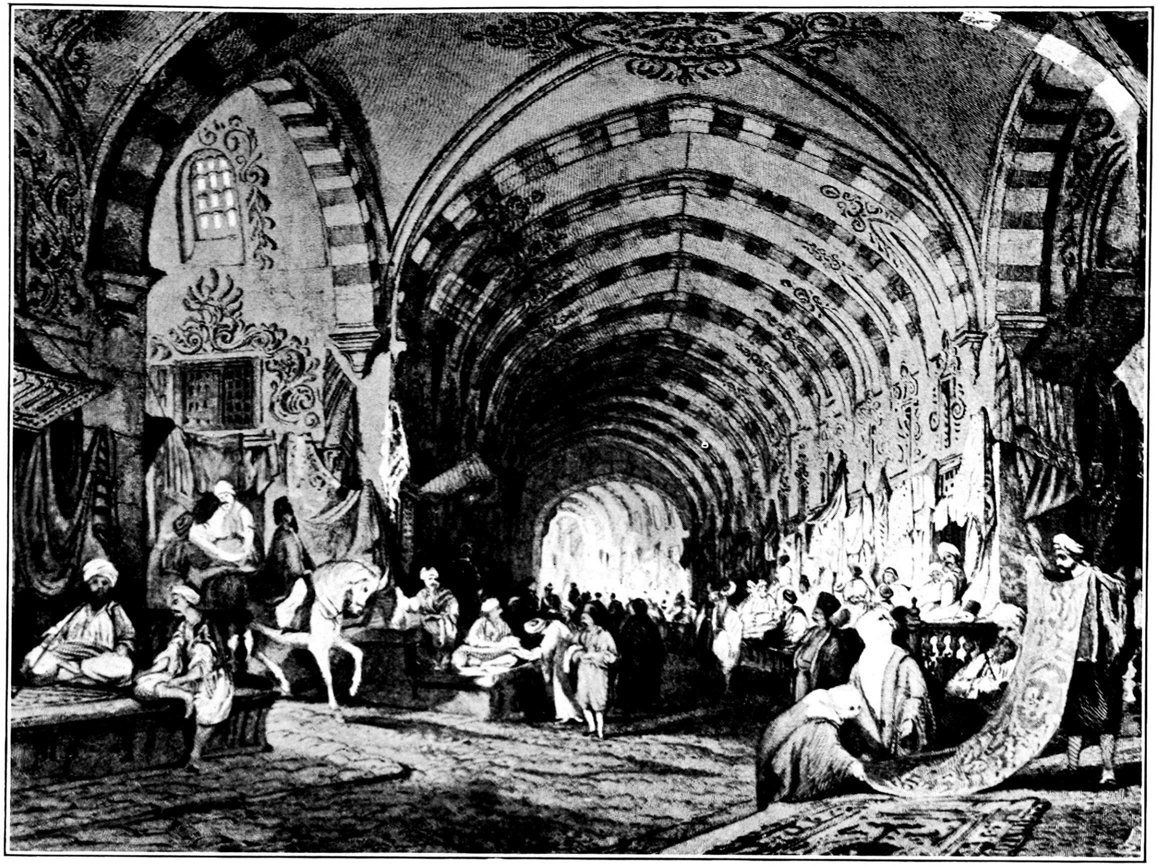
"Yes," said Hadji. "You are truly a wonderful woman, *Mâshâ'llâh* ! But I do not know why she came to the window and showed me a mirror both in front and back, instead of opening the door."

"Oh," said his wife, "that is very simple ; she means that you must go when the face of the moon has reversed itself, about ten o'clock." The hour arrived, Hadji hurried off, and so did his wife ; the one to see his love, and the other to inform the police.

Whilst Hadji and his charmer were talking in the garden the police seized them and carried them both off to prison ; and Hadji's wife, having accomplished her mission, returned home.

The next morning she baked a quantity of lokma cakes, and, taking them to the prison, begged entrance of the guards, and permission to distribute those cakes to the prisoners, for the repose of the souls of her dead. This being a request which could not be denied, she was allowed to enter. Finding the cell in which the lady who had infatuated her husband was confined, she offered to save her the disgrace of the exposure, provided she would consent never again to cast loving eyes upon Hadji, the merchant. Those conditions were gratefully accepted, and Hadji's wife changed places with the prisoner.

When they were brought before the judge, Hadji was thunderstruck to see his wife, but, being a wise man, he held his peace, and left her to do the talking, which she did most vigorously. Vehemently did she protest against the insult inflicted on both her and her husband. What right had the police to bring them to prison, because they chose to converse in a garden, seeing that they were lawfully wedded people ? In witness of the fact that they were man and wife she called upon



THE GREAT BAZAAR, CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page 14

the bekdji (watchmen) and the imam (priest) of the district and several of her neighbours.

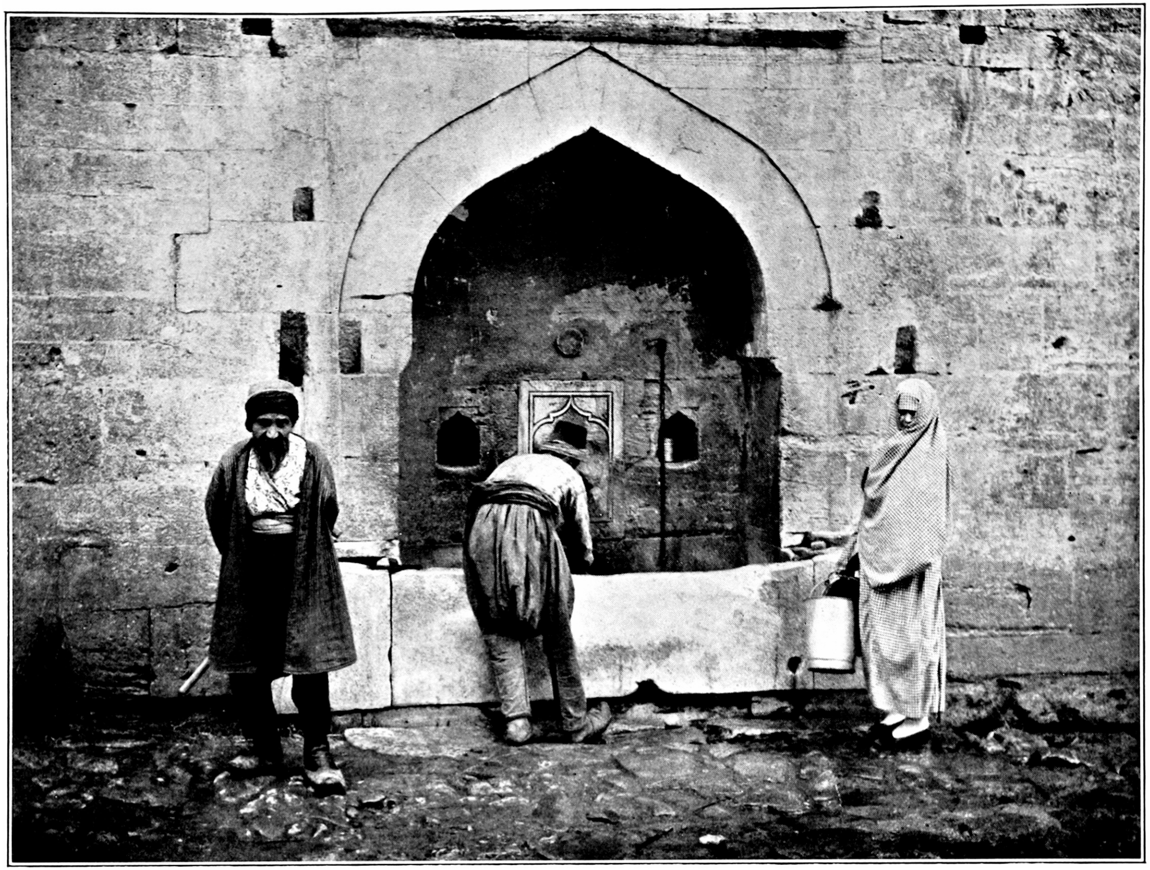
Poor Hadji was dumbfounded, as, accompanied by his better half, he soon after left the prison where he had expected to stay at least a year or two. "Truly thou art a wonderful woman, *Mâshâ'llâh.*" That is all he was able to say.

HIER-SIS TCHECHMÉ, "THE BLESSINGLESS FOUNTAIN"

ON the road to the Mevlévé Teké, which is outside the walls of Constantinople, beyond the famous Adrianople gate, is a strange looking fountain, perfect in its construction, but with no obtainable water. Few know the history of this fountain, which has never given water to man, beast, or bird ; though the style of construction would lead one to conclude that the builder intended it to quench the thirst of all who pined for water on the dusty road.

The history of this deceptive fountain, which is known as "Hier-sis," was told me many years ago, by an old Turk. It runs as follows :

"Long, long ago, there lived in Constantinople a khoja, Sari Chismeli Mehmed Agha, whose learning was profound, and who had travelled far and wide in the Ottoman Empire. Contrary to the invariable practice of the Mohammedans, clergymen as well as laymen, this pious man neglected during his youth and his early manhood to get married. The result was that, at a late age, when he should have been thinking of the pleasures in store for him in another world, Sari Chismeli Mehmed Agha took unto himself a wife—a wife possessing youth and beauty and family connexions. The newly married pair did not harmonize however. Their ages differed. Their sentiments, aspirations, and aims in life pointed in opposite directions.



Sébah and Joaillier

A VILLAGE FOUNTAIN

To face page 16

The khoja did all in his power to return his wife's affections, but the two drifted further apart every day, till, finally, they hardly ever spoke to one another, though they continued to live in the same house. The khoja, pious man, omitted not, however, to pray every day for the salvation of them both. Finally the khoja and his wife rarely even met one another. He was greatly occupied in the "Selamlik" (men's quarter) praying, teaching, and studying. She was just as occupied in her own portion of the house, the "Haremlik" (ladies' quarter) with her female relations and friends.

In this manner Ramazans and Baïrams came and went; but, beyond the prescribed salutation at the given hour, she did not intrude on him. The khoja could have taken another wife, but he refrained from doing so.

Finally, she became ill even unto death. The breath of Allah was on her and mortal man could not save her. This, she herself soon knew. She knew it by the great fever of the last thirst that will one day come to all. Realizing then, that the inevitable end was near, she implored the khoja to do her one last favour. She pined to be well thought of after she had passed away; she wished that the khoja whom she had so persistently ignored, should think well of her; she desired to do some deed of kindness to man, beast, or bird. She had missed her opportunities, while it was yet day, to do it herself; but she wished that others should do in her name something she had never done.

"Oh, khoja effendi!" said she—her tongue parched by the fever of death—"Oh, khoja effendi, the dust and heat of summer are so great that I feel for every man, bird, or beast that comes along this weary road. I feel their suffering in my own parched throat, in my own, alas! unquenchable thirst."

Poor creatures, indeed! Often had she looked at them, yet

never had she seen that the men's lips were cracked with the sun's rays beating down on them, that the beasts' tongues hung out parched and painful, or that the birds panted with open beaks, their wings drooping from weakness.

"Certainly," said the wife, "I have been both good and kind; and, above all, khoja effendi, I have been faithful to you! Erect, then, in my name, a fountain, that my memory may remain, and that those who pass this way may bless my name, as I trust you, khoja effendi, will always bless me."

The pious khoja forgave her: he wished her no ill, but he wished her relief. Men should forgive, men should help even their enemies in that dread moment, and so the khoja promised to build a fountain in her name.

He built it, and it stands there to this day. The water was brought from a great distance in pipes most carefully laid; and the quality of the water was much appreciated by water-drinkers, for it was water that would dissolve stone (*Tash-delen*). This name the Turks, for some reason or other, give to the best kind of drinking water. There was a marble fountain; there were taps and drinking goblets attached to chains, for the wayfarer. There was a drinking trough for beasts and cattle; and also, high on the fountain, places for the birds of the air to quench their thirst. But never a drop of water entered any of these receptacles.

The thirsty could hear the water rushing through the ground underneath the fountain, but the destination of this water was never discovered, and no thirst was ever quenched at that fountain. On the front of the fountain was engraven a few words about the khoja's wife to whom the fountain was dedicated. They had been written by the khoja; they were engraven under his direction; and they were to the following effect. "As she was in life, so is she in death, sterile. Her mission and object in life as well as the destination of her

blessing were as unknown to man, beast, or bird as the destination of the water which flows under the fountain and which you so clearly hear. The refreshing sound of that water promises great comfort but does not fulfil that promise. It is the mirage seen by the caravan leader dying of thirst in the desert—the vision of oases and of houris bringing gourds of life-giving water."

STORIES ABOUT KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN

STORIES ABOUT KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN

KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN

AMONG most peoples there arises, from time to time, a man who, without being at all entitled to the epithet great, represents so well the national character, especially on its more humorous and homely sides, that all sorts of sayings, jokes, *bons mots* and stupidities are attributed to him. He is even credited with a good deal of " sharp practice " which the modern city-dweller would call swindling, but which, for all that, is dear to the peasant's heart in every primitive land. The iconoclastic modern critic generally ascertains, it is true, that most of those jokes, stories, etcetera, date from a period far anterior to that of the personage to whom they are attributed ; and, indeed, in some cases, doubts have been thrown on the very existence of the personage himself. Nevertheless he is so useful to the student of national characteristics that, to modify slightly a famous saying, if he never existed he would deserve to be invented. For, when due allowance is made for humorous exaggeration, he generally represents with considerable fidelity the mind of the average man in the country to which he belongs.

Many people will, I am sure, be shocked at this doctrine—especially after they have read some of the ludicrous tales which are told in the present volume about Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín ; but, after all, the average man in most nations is a simple, homely, humorous, good-natured, hard-working soul with no great enthusiasm for war-lords or politics or epic poetry, or even for religion ; but with a taste for rough comfort, rude jokes,

stimulants, and stories about horses and women. The cultured classes, and the cliques of gentlemen and gentlewomen who write, take a different view, because in most cases they know nothing of the millions who form the base of the pyramid whereof they themselves are, in a sense, the apex. Charles Dickens did know, and he was consequently able to give us in his Mr. Pickwick a nearer approach to the average English type than had, up to that time, appeared in literature.

In England we all know how Mr. Pickwick and John Bull originated, just as in Portugal they all know about the literary origin of *Ze Povinho*, just as in Germany the Michel of the caricaturists deceives nobody, and just as in France Jacques Bonhomme is a creation of yesterday. It is to illiterate countries that we must go for the typical character which is half real, half a creation of the popular mind, but wholly loved and wholly believed in. In some remote districts in Ireland, Dan O'Connell,—"the immortal Dan,"—has to some extent suffered this kind of change. All sorts of witty stories are fathered on him. The same thing has taken place with regard to Father Tom Burke, a celebrated and very humorous Dominican preacher of the last century. It is to Turkey, however, with its splendid illiteracy and its mediæval atmosphere, that we must go for the best national personification of the kind I mean. And we find that personification in Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín.

Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín lived in Asia Minor towards the end of the fourteenth century of our era; but that does not prevent audacious story-tellers from making him a contemporary of Sultan Saladin, and from describing his trip from Constantinople to the Sweet Waters of Asia on the Bosphorus at a time when Constantinople and both shores of the Bosphorus were in the hands of the Greeks. I make no attempt, of course, to correct those delightful anachronisms,

for this collection only undertakes to give specimens of the tales told by the common people in Turkey, and does not pretend to be in any sense a scholarly or critical production.

The word khoja, sometimes pronounced hoja by the Turks, who are as averse from the guttural kh sound as we are ourselves, means teacher or schoolmaster ; and, in Turkey, it is used before the proper name, exactly as the word "Dominie" is used in Scotland. But as in Moslem countries the teacher has an ecclesiastical character, the khoja is something more than a schoolmaster. He is, rather, a mixture of the "Dominie" and the curate. One story in the present collection tells of Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín preaching in a mosque. Several other stories show him teaching his pupils or disciples.

Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín was, it is said, a contemporary of the celebrated but heterodox Turkish poet Nesímí. The khoja seems to have likewise been affected by the Hurúfí heresy, for he was solemnly cursed by his Sheikh to the usual accompaniment of bell, book, and candle. The poet was treated with greater severity, being skinned alive at Aleppo. Some of the poetry which he composed while that disagreeable operation was being carried out is given in Gibb's monumental "History of Ottoman Poetry" (edited by Professor E. G. Browne of Cambridge) ; but the best critics do not think it is quite up to Nesímí's usual standard.

Whether it was because he disappointed the public by his escape from being flayed alive also, or for some other reason, the fact remains that Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín became from this moment "the laughing-stock of the world." The phrase is that of Professor Browne ; and Mr. E. J. W. Gibb is hardly less severe, for he describes our reverend friend as "a Turkish Joe Miller who is credited with endless comical sayings and doings." One thing certain is that "the terrible curse"

launched at him by his ecclesiastical superior did not apparently make him feel "a penny the worse." On the contrary, it seemed to put new life into him, for it is from this time that we begin to hear of his jokes. Endless, indeed, are the stories which are told about this holy but ludicrous man; and, curiously enough, they seem to increase in number each year—like American Civil War pensioners. In the Stamboul coffee-houses one still hears them narrated every day by grave, turbaned Turks, sitting cross-legged before their *chibooks* and their tiny cups of coffee. A very large number of them will not bear repetition, owing to what we of this fastidious age and nation would regard as their appalling grossness. And, unfortunately, a great many others will not bear translation owing to the fact that their wit lies in the Turkish manner of expression, or in some reference to local interests or religious rites or Oriental customs, which it would be tedious to explain. It is instructive to note, however, that the typical Turk, as represented by Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín, is as unlike the Terrible Turk of Christian legend, literature, and history as Mr. Bernard Shaw's usual stage Englishman is unlike the heroic Englishman of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, or as Mr. Pickwick is unlike General Gordon. It may surprise some of my readers to learn that, in religious matters, the Turk is rather inclined to be lax, obtuse, and tolerant. On that account the quick-witted and fanatical Arab generally denounces him as practically an Infidel himself. No Turk ever becomes a "Mad Mullah." As a matter of fact the slow, heretical, and materialistic Osmanli suffer quite as much from "Mad Mullahs" as do the slow, heretical, and materialistic English. It must be admitted, therefore, that with his stupidity, his unconscious humour, and his good nature, Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín is far nearer the average Turk than any of the historical Osmanli with whose names we are all familiar.

It is pretty certain, indeed, that the average Turkish peasant knows precious little of the historical Osmanli—of Mohammed the Conqueror, for example, or Suleiman the Magnificent—while, on the other hand, there is no doubt that Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín has become literally a household word with him. In the village coffee-house he will repeat long stories about the khoja; and in the market, on the road, or when he is quarrelling with his wife, he will freely make use of the proverbs and pithy sayings attributed to the same holy but very human personage. Like the Spanish peasant, the Turk speaks in parables. Subtract from his discourse the wise saws wherewith he adorns it, and there will be almost nothing left. A few of those sayings may not, therefore, be out of place here. My first will show, by the way, that, with all his wisdom, the khoja never foresaw the advent of the aeroplane.

"O Brethren," said he, on one occasion, after having been so long in thought that his disciples expected some gem of divine revelation to drop from his lips, "O Brethren, give thanks to Allah the Most High, that camels have not got wings. For, if they had, imagine the condition of our roofs and houses, and what an unhappy state ours would be, if a pair of those brutes perched on the roof-top and we underneath!"

On another occasion a beggar knocked at the door of the khoja's house. The khoja, who happened to be upstairs at the time, called out to the visitor to come in. But, instead of entering, the beggar said, "Please come down," and when the khoja descended he pathetically solicited alms. The khoja listened attentively, and then said, "Please come upstairs." When they reached the top floor the khoja turned to the beggar and said in all solemnity, "May God give unto you!"—an Eastern expression, which, like the two

words, "Have patience!" of the Portuguese, immediately silences the most persistent beggar.

The khoja once yoked a young calf to a light cart, but the animal strongly objected to its liberty being thus interfered with, and became quite unmanageable. The khoja then took a stout stick and, going up to the ox, proceeded to punish it severely for not having taught the calf how to behave itself when it was being yoked.

One day the khoja was seen to be standing on one foot at the hour of prayer. When asked why he stood like a stork, on one foot, he answered that the other foot had not performed the ablution, as he had not sufficient water.

A guest passing the night at the khoja's house called out to him to give him the taper which was at his right side, as the night-light had gone out. Unto whom the khoja promptly answered, in a voice slightly roughened by irritation and sleep, "How can I know which is my right side in the dark?"

One of the khoja's disciples was an Abyssinian, who once had the misfortune to spill a bottle of ink over his revered master. When the other Softas asked the khoja what had happened to him, he simply said, "It is only the tears my black disciple has shed over me!"

The khoja had a difference with his wife, who told him in great anger to go away, pointing the direction in which he was to go. The khoja immediately obeyed her, and set off in the direction she had ordered him to take. After a few days hard travelling he met a man coming in the opposite direction, whom he begged to go and ask his wife if he had travelled far enough, or must he continue to go on.

STORIES ABOUT KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN

The khoja once travelled to a town at some distance, and when he reached the market-place he was much surprised and moved on finding that, in some respects, this foreign town reminded him of home. Mounting a chair, he said in a loud voice, " Friends, the air of this city is exactly the same as the air of my native city, and I see the same number of stars here as I saw there ! "

One day the khoja went with a friend to the den of a wolf in order to see the cubs. The khoja persuaded his friend to go into the den and bring out the young wolves. The friend descended into the cave while the khoja kept watch. The mother wolf was abroad, but returned in haste at the first cry of her cubs. Just as the furious animal was disappearing into the hole, the khoja seized hold of its tail, and held on to it with all his might despite its desperate struggles. His friend angrily called out to him asking why he was throwing in so much dust and dirt on top of him, whereupon, in a choked voice, the khoja replied, " If the wolf's tail breaks you'll soon see what the dust and dirt mean ! "

The khoja once entered a vegetable garden and helped himself generously to such vegetables as he felt he required at the moment or might require later on. The gardener happened to come upon the scene, however ; and, speaking with considerable heat, he inquired what the holy man was doing there. Without any hesitation, the khoja replied mildly that the wind had blown him thither. The gardener then asked how it came to pass that those vegetables which belonged to him, the gardener, happened to be in the khoja's hands, and how a number of other vegetables had managed to get stowed away in the khoja's bosom. In a benignant voice, Nasr-ud-Dín answered, saying that the wind was so violent that, in trying to save himself from being overturned, he

had caught at anything and everything which came in his way, with the result that those vegetables had got into his hands and into the breast of his garment.

"But what about those vegetables in the sack?" continued the gardener, whose manner was becoming decidedly impolite.

"Why now," quoth the saintly man, scratching his head in perplexity, "that's the very question I was asking myself just when you seized hold of me!"

Some boys, anxious to play a practical joke on the khoja, asked him to climb a tree, their object being to run away with his sandals. They informed the khoja that no one had ever been able to climb that particular tree, and the khoja, always a sportsman, despite his years and the restrictions imposed on him by his sacred profession, at once said that he could do it; whereupon the boys, of course, told him stoutly that he could not, and defied him to try.

The khoja immediately accepted the challenge, and gathered up the skirts of his robe, which he tied round his waist to give his limbs freedom. Then taking off his sandals he placed them in his bosom and began to climb the tree. Naturally the boys were disappointed and hurt on seeing the sandals go up the tree as well as the khoja, and it was not without asperity that they asked the holy man what he was going to do with his sandals in the tree. "O," said the khoja, somewhat taken aback, "I—I need them. I may find a road up here and I don't want to get footsore. Always look well to your feet, my children! Whatever you do, don't get sore feet!"

The khoja was seen one day perched up in an apricot tree, enjoying the fruit. The owner, espying him, asked what business he had up there, and with whose permission he was eating the apricots. The khoja in answer said: "Don't you

see that I'm a nightingale ?" The owner of the garden laughed, and told the khoja that nightingales were birds and that they sang beautifully. At this the khoja began to imitate a bird as best he could, but his vocal efforts only amused the gardener, who said : " Surely you don't call that singing ?" " Well, you see, I'm a Persian nightingale (Bulbul)" said the khoja, "and this is the way in which all the Persian nightingales sing."

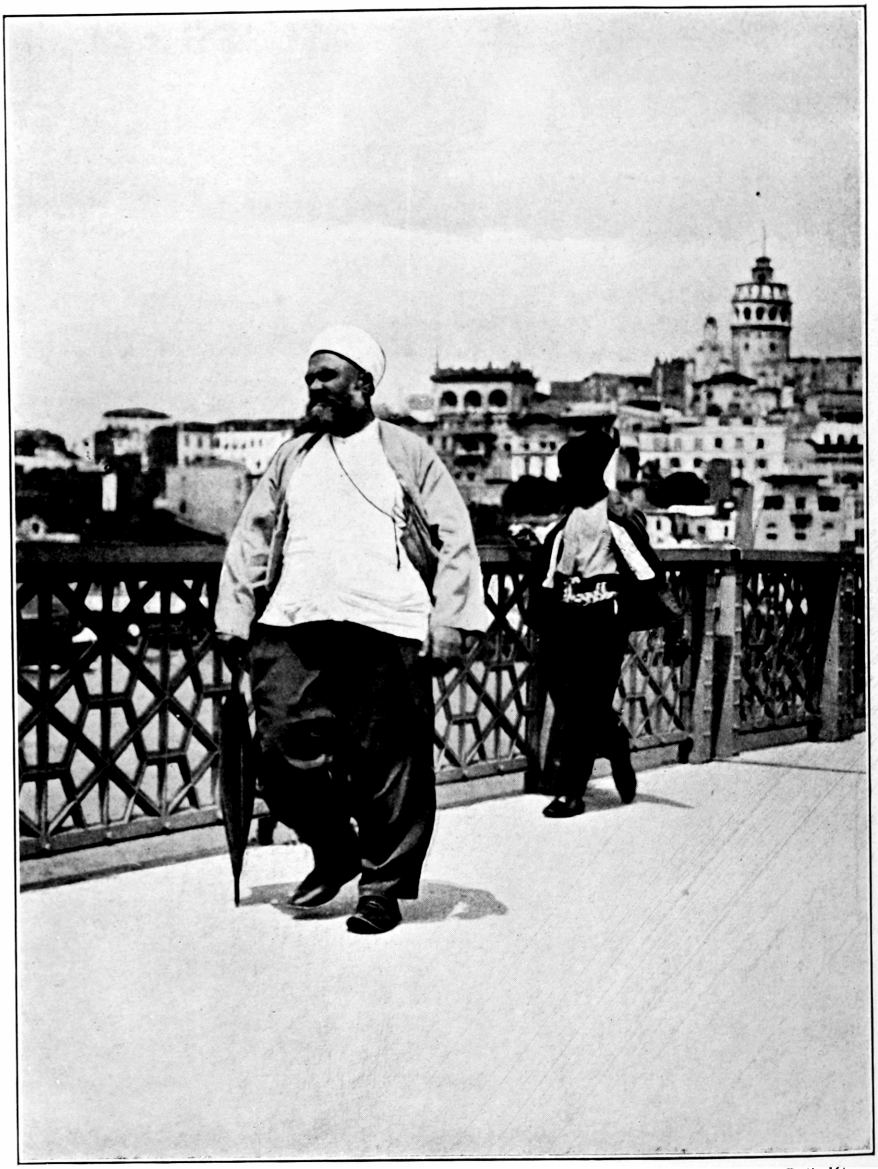
Such are the shorter tales told about Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín, that disreputable old clergyman whom the Court chroniclers of his time probably regarded as a most vulgar person ot doubtful orthodoxy and still more doubtful sobriety. Yet, curiously enough, those tales have survived, while the pompous and inflated productions of the Stambuli historians have sunk into deserved oblivion. Of these Stambuli bigwigs " Odysseus " says :

" I will not here enumerate the Stambuli chroniclers and poets. The curious reader will find their names in any history or encyclopædia. But if I pass them by in silence, it is not from distaste, but from diffidence in recommending a study which can appeal to few. Their writings may be compared to the gateways of Dolma Bagche, or some triumph of caligraphic skill in which the letters and dots are arranged not in the positions which facilitate comprehension, but in those which produce the best artistic effect. Of late years it has become the custom to compose in a comparatively simple style, but the old ornate language can still be read in that column of the newspaper which has the felicity to contain the Court circular or the orders which have come forth from 'the centre of Majesty,' and which, 'honoured in their exit and their issue,' burst upon a delighted world. The combination of dignity and fatuity which this style affords is

unrivalled.* There is something contagious in its ineffable complacency, unruffled by the most palpable facts. Everything is sublime, everybody magnanimous and prosperous. We move among the cardinal virtues and their appropriate rewards (may God increase them !), and, secure in the shadow of the ever-victorious Caliph, are only dimly conscious of the existence of tributary European Powers and ungrateful Christian subjects. Can any Western poet transport his readers into a more enchanted land ? "

"Odysseus" goes on, however, to say : "There is another kind of Turkish literature, if indeed that name can be given it, consisting of popular songs and stories, which is more natural, more interesting, and perhaps more important than the works of the Court historians and poets. A collection of them has been published [in Hungarian] by Dr. Ignacz Kunos, together with some plays and riddles, of which latter the Turk, like many other Turanian tribes, is peculiarly fond. Unlike the 'Tales of a Parrot' and the 'Forty Viziers,' which are mostly mere translations, these stories have a peculiar flavour of their own. They are rude and coarse, and smack somewhat of the barrack-room, or rather the camp-fire, but it is a camp-fire on some central Asian plain, and the soldiers gathered round it listen with pleasure to tales of miracles and magic ; of kings, who, at the recommendation of dervishes, go down wells, and find at the bottom gardens, dragons, and beautiful princesses. In the same way I have heard an old country Turk relate to an appreciative audience, who showed no signs of incredulity, a story of his youth in which a Kurdish magician, who had three eyes and was invulnerable, played a conspicuous part.

* In short it is somewhat like what the political "leaders" in the "D.T." would be if a C—ns—r—t—ve Government were in office and Lord B—rn—m Prime Minister.



Daily Mirror

A MODERN KHOJA ON THE GALATA BRIDGE FOLLOWED BY A BLACK BOY SLAVE

To face page 33

The jinns, peris, and dervishes certainly suggest the 'Arabian Nights,' but there is something dreamy and vast in the setting of the stories which reminds one rather of the 'Kalevala' and Samoyede legends. It is peculiarly interesting to note how often the hero is some nameless adventurer, who either by his own energy and intelligence, or by the timely intervention of some supernatural power, rises from nothing to the highest position. Such careers are characteristic of old Turkish life, just as the horseman who rides for ten years across a plain is characteristic of their ideas of physiography and the duty of man.

"Perhaps the most original quality of popular Turkish literature is its humour. The average Turk is distinctly a merry man and loves a joke, particularly a practical joke. Wit he has little, and refinement less, but a genuine sense of the ludicrous, and a special fondness for that class of absurdity known as 'a bull,' and peculiar, as far as I am aware, to Irishmen and Turks.*

"The classical exponent of this species of humour is Khoja Nasreddin Effendi [or, more correctly, Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín] the author or hero of a collection of stories known all over Turkey, and constantly repeated, if not exactly read. The khoja is believed to have lived in Akshehir in the fourteenth century of our era, and is the type of the village Imam. In the printed edition of the stories he is represented as a stout man with enormous spectacles, riding on a donkey and carrying the saddle-bags on his shoulders, as he is said to have done on one occasion from a well-intentioned desire to relieve the animal of their weight. His mind is an extraordinary mixture of stupidity and shrewdness; the latter,

* Hence the appropriateness of an Irishman being one of the authors of this book in which the humour of the misunderstood Turk is for the first time presented to the British public.

however, is sufficiently predominant to generally secure him success in the end in spite of his blunders ; and, besides, one is never sure how far he is really dense and how far pretending to be a fool.

"The following examples will give some idea of these stories.

"One Friday the khoja's fellow-villagers insisted on his preaching a sermon in the mosque, which he had never done, not having any oratorical gifts. He mounted the pulpit sorely against his will, and looking round at the congregation, asked in despair, 'Oh, true believers, do you know what I am going to say to you?' They naturally replied 'No.' 'Well, I am sure I don't,' he said, and hurriedly left the mosque. The congregation were, however, determined to have their sermon, and next Friday forced him again into the pulpit. When he again put the same question they replied by agreement, 'Yes.' 'Oh then,' he said, 'if you know, I needn't tell you,' and again escaped. On the third Friday the villagers made what they thought must be a successful plan. They got the khoja into the pulpit, and when he asked what had now become his usual question, replied, 'Some of us know and some of us don't. 'Then,' replied the khoja, 'let those of you who know tell those who don't.' After this the congregation resigned themselves to do without sermons.*

"One hot night the khoja slept on the verandah to be cool. He awoke, however, in a fright, and saw what he took to be a robber dressed in white climbing over the garden wall. He seized his bow and immediately sent an arrow straight through the imaginary burglar. On calm examination, however, he found that the white object was one of his own night-shirts

* A slightly different version of this story is given elsewhere in the present volume.

which his wife had washed and hung on the wall to dry. The khoja accordingly began to call out 'Praise be to God.' and other religious exclamations, which awoke the neighbours, who mistook them for the morning call to prayer. Finding it still wanted several hours to sunrise, they surrounded the khoja and indignantly inquired what he meant by his untimely piety. 'I was thanking God,' he replied, 'that I was not inside my shirt when I shot an arrow through it.'

"The country Turk will spend hours in telling such anecdotes, and every new invention is fathered on Nasreddin Effendi. So great is his popularity, that it is said that one Sultan offered to maintain, at the Imperial expense, any of his descendants who would appear at Constantinople and prove their lineage. Many claimants presented themselves, but on examination were rejected. At last one evening came an uncouth figure with a Konia accent, mounted on an Anatolian pony. He dismounted at the Seraglio gate, and, not seeing clearly in the dusk, tied up his horse to one of the large drums used by the janissaries, which happened to be lying there. The horse, however, soon found out that he was not attached to a fixed object, and began to drag about the drum, kicking it with his feet. The guard rushed out, the drumming continued; the word spread in the palace that the janissaries were in revolt; among the janissaries, that the Sultan was going to massacre them, and only after a general uproar was the cause of the disturbance discovered. The claimant for State support was brought before the Sultan and explained the object of his visit and his error. The padishah and all his council were unanimously of opinion that no further evidence was needed, and that his action could only be explained on the principle of heredity. The allowance was granted at once."

THE KHOJA AND THE JEW

KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN'S nearest neighbour was a Jew, a merchant of repute, and the Jew and the khoja became quite friendly. They were such close neighbours that they shared in common one chimney and one well.

They often spoke together, for the Jew had a very high opinion of the khoja, whose piety and solid wisdom he much appreciated. The Jew himself, though wealthy and a bit of a skinflint, was a pious man, as befitted one of the "peoples of the Book," and he and the khoja had many tastes and opinions in common.

Now it so happened that a practical joke severed for ever this pleasing intimacy, born of mutual confidence and esteem. It is related that every morning the khoja would pray in a loud voice to the Most High, entreating Him to take pity on his misery. In what was he not deserving? Why was he so poor?

"O Allah!" the khoja used to say, "there are many men in this world who have more than they require and much to spare, though they neither give to the poor, nor care if they are guided by Thee. On the contrary they know Thee not, and they seek not after the joys of eternity. It is not envy, O Allah! it is dire need that compels me to ask for a portion of their great wealth, their superfluous share. Let my anxiety be lessened without any anxiety being caused unto them. Is it not written: 'As for the infidels, their wealth shall not

profit them anything, nor their children, against God. They shall be the fuel of hell fire?' I have great need at the present moment of one thousand pieces of gold—one thousand pieces—and, O Allah! if Thou sendest me only nine hundred and ninety-nine pieces it will not be sufficient, and I shall be obliged to refuse the gift. Nay! I will not accept a single piece! One thousand altoons and not one less, I plead for."

The Jew listened for many days to this prayer which the khoja sent up the common chimney first thing every morning, and he wondered. Allah on one of these days inspired the Jew, and he thought about the khoja and wondered if that devout man, whose piety was well known, would *really* refuse nine hundred and ninety-nine altoons. And, strange to say, the Jew was tempted to try him. The ways of Allah are not the ways of man! Allah is mighty and wise.

The Jew thereupon counted out nine hundred and ninety-nine pieces of gold and dropped them down their common chimney just as the khoja was vehemently protesting, for the hundredth time, that he would never, never accept one altoon less than the even thousand. The khoja took up the bag and counted aloud the gold, piece by piece, and the Jew listened. When the khoja got to nine hundred and ninety-nine, "Behold!" said he, "the Lord is endued with extensive mercies." Then after a pause he said: "*Ey pek iyi! pek iyi!* (Very good! very good!) He who sent me this sum will also send me the missing altoon. Allah is great! And there is no telling *how* He will send it, as there is no telling how He sent these nine hundred and ninety-nine most needful pieces."

The Jew, poor man, was horrified when he heard this, and, without more ado, he rushed to the khoja's door and endeavoured to explain that he had purposely dropped those nine hundred and ninety-nine pieces of gold down the chimney because he had heard the khoja swearing he would

not accept one less than a thousand. He concluded by asking the venerable ecclesiastic to give him that bag of gold back again—quick. The khoja, who seemed greatly surprised at what the Jew said, coldly assured his irritated visitor that he had never in his life asked any man for a penny, let alone for such a large sum, but that if by chance the Jew had, on some previous occasion, lent him anything which the khoja had forgotten about, he was willing to go with the Jew to the court and to abide by the judgment of the kadi. The Jew jumped at this offer and immediately said, "Yes! Come! let us go to the kadi!"

But the khoja said: "I cannot *walk* to the court—at my age. You don't expect me to *walk*, do you?" and the Jew thereupon secured a mule for him. Even that was not enough, however. The khoja said that he must have a fur coat, as the weather was cold. Again the Jew rushed off and returned with a fur coat for the khoja, whereupon they proceeded together to the court.

The kadi listened to the case which was eloquently and truthfully put to him by the Jew, who ended by saying: "My altoons, nine hundred and ninety-nine in number, and the leather bag containing them, are both in his pocket, and I ask that they be returned to me."

The khoja, just as truthfully, gave his version of the case. He told the kadi how he had asked the Most High for many days to give him one thousand altoons, and how—praise be to the Most High!—his prayer had that very morning been answered—minus one altoon. "And who can say," added the holy man, simply, "but that the missing altoon will be given to me shortly? He who gave me so many gold pieces can surely give me one gold piece more. *Allah-â Teshekkur ederim* (I thank God). Allah is rich and merciful. Allah is bounteous and wise."

The kadi was struck dumb by the singularity of the case, and the khoja profited by his amazement in order to add that assuredly this man, the plaintiff, was demented. "I should not be at all surprised," quoth he, "if he next said that the mule on which I came to court is his also, and that the very coat on my back likewise belongs to him."

The Jew at once said, "But they *are* both mine. I got them for you at your own request."

Whereupon the kadi at once gave judgment in favour of the khoja, being convinced that the Jew was not in his right mind. And when they left the court, the poor Jew was maltreated by the people for having had the audacity to lie to the kadi, and to malign the khoja, who had clearly been favoured by Allah and Allah alone. For the Lord is wise and knowing.

THE KHOJA IN THE DIVORCE COURTS

TRULY the khoja was a wise and holy man. Verily he was orthodox and not one of the idolaters. He read much, but he thought more. The Koran was his guide, and every action of his life was inspired (according to the khoja himself) by the teachings contained in the Suras, Sunnas and Hadis of Mohammed. His first thought on waking was about Allah and his Prophet. His thoughts during the day were fixed on the same subject, and his last prayer at night was: "Allah! the only true guide! Help thy servant to a pious appreciation of the Suras! Praise be to Thee, O Allah! Place me not, O Lord, with the ungodly people!"

At intervals during the day he would burst out into the great prayer of the Mohammedans:

"Allah! there is no God but he, the living, the self-subsisting. Neither slumber nor sleep seizeth him. To him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven and on earth. Who is he that can intercede with him but through his good pleasure? He knoweth that which is past and that which is to come unto them, and they shall not comprehend anything of his knowledge but so far as he pleaseth. His throne is extended over heaven and earth, and the preservation of both is no burden unto him. He is the high, the mighty."

The great endeavour of his life was to imitate in thought

and deed as far as it was possible the life of Mohammed. The Koran permits man, under certain legal and moral conditions, to take as many as four wives. The Prophet himself took more (but *he* was the Prophet), and amongst them was a widow. To do this all that was required (besides pluck) was an inspired Sura. He even had the courage to marry another man's wife. This also the Sura permitted—nay *ordered.**

And here I might explain for the benefit of the unbelievers whom I see here before me to-day that in Islam marriage is not only a civil contract but also a religious duty incumbent on all who possess the ability. "When a servant of God marries, verily he perfects half his religion." The Prophet once asked a man if he was married, and being answered in the negative said, "Art thou sound and healthy?" When the man replied that he was, the Prophet said unto him, "Then thou art one of the brothers of the devil."

"Marry early and marry often!" Such, O true believers, is the teaching of Islam on this point. And it is owing to ignorance of this salutary teaching, dearly beloved, that we behold the sad state of things which prevails to-day among the unhappy children of the Giaour. Do we not hear of men growing up actually unto the age of twenty without having taken unto themselves even one single wife? Do we not hear of unveiled and masterless women running wild in the bazaars

* Probably it was just that pleasant kind of so-called compulsion which makes a London merchant, who is desirous of selling off shop-soiled goods, hoist the austere signal, "Compulsory Sale: House Coming Down;" or which makes the reformed toper, surprised in a lapse after a brief period of sobriety, gurgle forth the mystic but exculpatory words: "Doctor's orders!" By the way, the story-teller rather understates his case for, as a matter of historical fact, Mohammed married not one widow, but ten widows and one maid. It is a modern khoja who is supposed to be telling this story in a Stamboul café, and on the table are copies of the *Sabah* and the *Ikdam*, containing the latest news from all parts of the world.

and in the public places, burning mosques and breaking coffee-house windows because, verily, no man hath taken them to his harem ? Alas ! *Vâh ! Vâh !* how pitiful ! Thanks be to Allah that such disorders are unknown amongst us, their absence being an evident proof of the truth of our holy religion. Though verily, brethren, a certain one of those mad women of Ingiltera (England) must have been inspired by Allah himself, if it is true, as I hear, that she smote even with a scimitar a certain famous idol, yclept " Venus," representing an unveiled hanoum (lady) in Londra (London).* And is not this inspiration all the more likely when we remember that in the opinion of the wisest Sheikhs and Imâms the All-merciful doth illuminate the mind of every woman for a few seconds once in forty years ?

But of what was I discoursing ? The happiness of marriage. And yet, O true believers, all marriages, even in Islam, are not necessarily happy. Hence the necessity for that beautiful facility of divorce which hath been mercifully accorded us by the Prophet (on whom be peace !). Even the pious Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín married thoughtlessly on one occasion a woman who did *not* bring him peace—far from it. Need I add, dear brethren, that she was a widow ?

For a short period the holy man seemed content, for the Mohammedan never speaks of his home life, but to the surprise of the neighbours the widow suddenly sued one day for a divorce, and both she and the khoja appeared in court, the wife to plead her case and the husband to defend himself as best he could.

Beginning with the customary salutation of " Strength to

* As is well known, the Mohammedans regard the reproduction of the human figure in painting or sculpture as sinful and idolatrous. Apparently the story-teller here refers to the Suffragette outrage on the Rokeby "Venus" in the National Gallery.

the kadi!" the widow complained volubly that the khoja had ill-treated her to such a degree that she could no longer stay with him. He had destroyed and broken all her furniture and belongings, and at the same time inflicted on her, and that without any cause, severe bodily injuries. "Yes, verily," quoth the good woman, "having first smashed all the crockery in the house with a flat-iron, he suddenly hit me over the head with a frying-pan. There's still a lump on my head as big as a duck's egg, but without the permission of the Court I cannot, of course, raise my veil in order to exhibit it."

The irate lady concluded by declaring in a shrill voice that her statements would not be difficult to prove. Their house was close at hand, and everything in it was her personal property; and it would be easy to verify her assertion that the khoja had smashed the tables, chairs, crockery, cooking utensils, and everything else which the place contained. As for herself, she was ready, she repeated, to exhibit if necessary the marks of the severe ill-treatment she had personally received from the khoja on the previous night. She claimed both her immediate freedom and full compensation for the things destroyed by the khoja. Having shaken her clenched fist in the direction of her husband she left the witness-box.

But the khoja (though there *was* a scratch or two on his nose, and though some of his beard seemed to be missing)—the khoja, I say, never once lost for an instant the calm and benignant bearing which befitted a servant of Allah.

When asked what defence he had to offer, the holy man was eloquent but simple. "It is true," quoth he, "that all the furniture belonged to my wife, and that I have destroyed it all. It is also true that I unwittingly did her bodily harm. This I regret, but the circumstances of the case are as follows:

"The first night of our life she told me the life of Mehmet, her late husband, and how long she and he had lived happily together. The second night she told me how much it had cost her late husband to buy the furniture with which she had furnished my house. The third night she dwelt so long and so fondly on the perfections of her Mehmet that, when day dawned, I was beginning to see the shadow of that perfect and lamented man flitting about the bedroom. On the fourth night when she began to compare Mehmet to me, and to show that he was superior to me in every way—well, O kadi! the shadow materialized. In despair and in self-protection against this superior intruder, I used as missiles or as weapons everything that came within my reach. In order to drive him away, I hurled at him tables and chairs, pots and pans. In my strange agitation, O kadi! I broke his furniture; and, alas! when he got too near my wife, I must have struck her also in my efforts—my perfectly legitimate efforts, mind you—to strike him and to defend myself.

"It is possible—nay it is right, under lawful conditions—for a man to have one, two, three, or even four wives; but has anyone ever heard of one woman having two husbands, and both husbands living under the same roof? Let her go, then, to her Mehmet—I cannot take her back!" Then, raising his voice so suddenly and so high that the kadi (who, as a matter of fact, was half asleep) nearly fell off the bench, the khoja vociferated: "*Git! Git! Git!** Get thee hence; thou shalt be one of the contemptible! Get thee hence, despised! And may I never see thy face again!"

The divorce was granted, but the widow received no com-

* Curiously enough, *Git* bears in Turkish exactly the same meaning as it bears in the curt and vigorous language of the U.S.A.—also, by the way, a land of facile divorce—but I lay no stress and build no theory on this truly remarkable coincidence.

pensation, for a Moslem husband has but to tell his wife three times to depart and the divorce is accomplished, he being then in the position of petitioner. This we owe, as you are all aware, O true believers, to the benignant and heaven-inspired legislation of the Prophet. [General reverential murmur of, "May Allah be pleased with him!"]

THE KHOJA IN THE PULPIT

KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN one day addressed his congregation from the pulpit in the following words: "I beseech you to tell me truly, O brethren! O true believers! if what I am going to say to you is already known to you."

And the answer came, as in one voice, from his congregation, that they did not know, and that it was not possible for them to know, what the khoja was going to say to them. "Then," quoth the preacher, "of what use to you or to me is an unknown subject?"—and he descended from the pulpit and left the mosque.

On the following Friday his congregation, instead of having decreased, had greatly increased, and their anxiety to hear what he was going to say was felt in the very atmosphere.

The khoja ascended the pulpit, and said: "O brethren! O true believers! I beseech you to tell me truly if what I am going to say to you is already known to you."

The answer that came to the khoja was so spontaneous as to suggest pre-arrangement. They all shouted, "Yes, khoja, we do know what you are going to say to us."

"That being the case," quoth the khoja, "there is no need either of you wasting your time or of me wasting my time"—and, descending from the pulpit, he left the mosque. His congregation, having prayed, also left gradually, one by one, and in groups.

On the following Friday Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín again mounted



Daily Mirror

"ON THE STEPS OF A MOSQUE"

To face page 46

the pulpit, and saw that his mosque was so crowded that not a nook or corner in it was empty. He addressed his congregation in exactly the same manner.

"O brethren! O true believers?" said he, "I ask you to tell me truly if what I am going to say is already known to you?"

And again the answer of his numerous congregation had evidently been prepared beforehand, for one-half of them rose and said: "Yes, khoja, we do know what you are going to say to us." Then the other half rose and said, "O! Khoja Effendi, how could we poor, ignorant people know what you intend to say to us?"

The kojah answered: "It is well said; and now if the half that knows what I am going to say would explain to the other half what it is, I would be deeply grateful, for, of course, it will be unnecessary for me to say anything."

Whereupon he descended from the pulpit and left the mosque.

THE KHOJA AND THE THIEVES

KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN was often consulted on all sorts of matters—matters of everyday occurrence, and matters strange and exceptional. Being moreover, as we have seen, a wise man, his decisions were always accepted without a murmur. He said, "Do so and so," and that was sufficient. None questioned his decision, for he knew all things—had he not read the Koran? On one occasion three robbers came to him and submitted their case. It was an important case, for it concerned the disposal of a whole sack of wheat, think! They came to him and each told his story, and promised to abide by the holy man's decision.

The difficulty between them was that they could not agree over the division of the sack of wheat. Each claimed the greater share, on the ground that he had risked the most and done the most to secure the coveted booty.

One of them had learned that a sack of wheat had arrived from the country, and that it was stored in a peasant's cottage in the populous part of the village. He even knew, having followed the peasant, where the sack of wheat lay. On informing his companions of the possible booty, it was agreed, after much discussion, that their plan of action should be as follows: One of them should watch and give warning at the first sign of danger. The other, armed with a yatagan, was to dispatch the owner if he were awake. Should the owner happen to be asleep, this second robber was to stand

over him with his weapon, ready to give him his death-blow, until such time as the sack of wheat was in a place of safety. The duty of the third robber was to bear off the sack of wheat.

Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín listened to all three versions of the story, and admitted that each of the thieves had had a very dangerous mission. He added that it would be very difficult for him to satisfy either them or himself, if he decided the matter as a man or as a kadi would decide it, so he would ask them whether they wished him to decide their case to the best of his ability as a man, or to decide it as Allah decides the rewards of man on earth. He did not know what Allah did in paradise, but if they approved of his deciding the matter as Allah decided such matters among men on earth, then he thought that he might satisfy them.

The thieves consulted among themselves and finally declared themselves content to let the holy man divide the spoils as Allah would, and not as a kadi or a man would, for they feared that this latter course might have involved legal considerations and precedents that were beyond them. Besides, the very mention of the word "kadi" may have made them feel uncomfortable.

The khoja contemplated long, and the robbers watched him with anxious eyes. Finally the holy man got up and, walking in a somnambulistic manner toward the sack, he put his hand into the mouth thereof, and, muttering to himself something which the thieves could not understand, he took out one single grain of wheat. With closed eyes, he said: "This is the way Allah distributes His favours to man on earth. You, Mustapha, take this one grain of wheat and be grateful!" Then, filling his hand with grains, he turned to another of the litigants and said: "Ali, Allah apportions unto you this handful of wheat as your share for your evil doings. Few are

so rewarded for deeds of this nature, but what you do receive, receive with gratitude ; and who knows but that these grains, obtained by sin, may produce an abundant harvest of good works ? If so, reap that harvest, my child, in thankfulness and repentance."

Finally, taking hold of the whole sack, he gave it to the third robber, saying : "To you, Mehmet, who watched at the corner, well out of harm's way, to you Allah gives this as a reward for the labour and the dangers which the others underwent. Now [opening his eyes], depart in peace all of you. Allah has given to many an unequal share, to many, undeservedly, the greater share ; and to many who deserve much, the lesser share. But the ways of Allah are not the ways of man. Allah be with you ! Go in peace, my children ! I have distributed your booty among you after the example of Allah Himself, the Merciful, the Compassionate."

The two surprised and disappointed thieves realized the truth of this, and allowed Mehmet to carry the sack of wheat to his home.

And when they themselves prepared to depart the khoja admonished them that a soul becometh liable to destruction by that which it committeth. "Verily, O true believers," he said unto them, "I am one of those who counsel you aright. And is it not written in the perspicuous book that, if you reform not, you shall surely be of those who perish ?"

THE KHOJA AND THE CAULDRON

BEING once in need of a cauldron the khoja went to one of his neighbours and borrowed a large copper cauldron which answered his requirements so well that he had no wish to part with it. Instead of returning the borrowed utensil on the promised day, he went to his neighbour and handed him in a somewhat dejected manner a much smaller cauldron resembling in shape the one which he had borrowed.

The owner looked at it suspiciously, and asked, "What is this?" whereunto the khoja answered, "Your cauldron has given birth to a little one and is far too unwell for me to return it to-day. Take its offspring instead, I beseech you."

The owner of the cauldron was much surprised, but he was at the same time not a little gratified at this unexpected fertility, and when his wife soundly abused him for having thus allowed himself to be "put upon," he testily advised the good dame to have patience and not to ask any questions for a day or two.

The khoja's need of the cauldron having come to an end, he brought it back and said, "Here, take your cauldron back again, for now it is quite well." The neighbour and his family rejoiced, and the fame of the khoja was much increased.

Some days later the khoja again required the cauldron, and this time his neighbour was so pleased to lend it to him that

he even helped to carry it to the khoja's house. After a considerable time had elapsed without any baby cauldron appearing on the scene, the neighbour called on Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín to inquire when he might expect his cauldron to return. He was polite and profusely apologetic, but he said that his wife wanted it.

The khoja seemed very much surprised that his neighbour had not heard the news—the sad news that the cauldron had died. The manner and tone of the obliging neighbour now underwent an instant change, and he remonstrated loudly. Indeed, he created such an uproar that a crowd speedily assembled round the house ; but, so far as the khoja was concerned, the large cauldron was dead for all time, and he advised his neighbour to return home quietly, and break the news to the baby cauldron which he had claimed as his. "For it stands to reason," quoth Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín, "that anything or anyone that can give birth to young, can also die."

The crowd agreed, and said that verily he spake well and truly. It was *hak* (just).

THE KHOJA'S DINNER-PARTY

KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN met one day a number of his student disciples, and was apparently so glad to see them that he begged them to return with him to his home and sup with him. To express the desire that they should sup with him was equivalent to a command from the aged master. The students one and all declared, therefore, their willingness, nay, their anxiety, to do anything that was agreeable to the khoja, for the honour would live long with them, and the memory of the repast would never be forgotten.

They accompanied the khoja to his home, and on the threshold he begged them to enter and be his welcome guests. With true Oriental politeness the khoja humbly assumed for the moment the part of the subordinate in station and in learning, paying homage to each one of his disciples in turn. Having then sought out his wife, he informed her in high glee that he had brought a number of his disciples to sup with him, and bade her proceed immediately to prepare for them a pot of welcome broth.

"Oh, master!" quoth his wife, "with what can I make a pot of broth for you and your guests? Did you, perchance, bring anything home with you? No! Is a miracle, then, about to happen that will give me the mutton wherefrom to provide the broth? You know there is neither meat nor oil nor rice nor anything else in the house, and if you have brought naught with you, and if no miracle is about to take

place, then, alas ! no broth can be made, master, for you or for your guests."

"Where is the pot wherein we make our broth ?" asked the khoja. It was empty and clean, but the khoja snatched it up, and in all haste brought it into the presence of the students, and addressed them as follows :

"Effendiler (gentlemen), pray forgive me for having brought you hither ; for there is neither mutton, nor oil, nor rice, nor anything else with which to make broth ; but this is the pot in which the broth would have been made, had there been anything to make it"—and he turned the vessel so that his guests might see the inside of it. His disciples were loud in their protestations that the honour done them was not lessened by the absence of food, but they soon after departed, and for all time remembered this remarkable supper—the only supper, by the way, to which their master, Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín Effendi, had ever invited them.

THE KHOJA AS HOST

THE hospitality of the East is proverbial. If you call on a man while he is eating, he will always consider it an obligation incumbent on him, no matter what your position or his position may be, to greet you heartily with a loud cry of, "*Bouroun! Bouroun!*" ("Welcome! Welcome!") and to invite you to partake of his meal—even though that meal consist only of bread and water seasoned with olives or onions. The food may not be always famous, but the hospitable spirit is invariably hearty. The desire to share their food with others seems to be born with the Oriental and with the Russian, who is, after all, an Oriental also. High and low frequently send out hearty invitations to their friends and to the friends of their friends, even though the sharing leaves them all hungry at the end of the repast.

To this universal law of the East Nasr-ud-Dín was no exception, as the following story will show.

A friend of the khoja once presented him with a lamb. The lamb was killed and roasted and done to the taste of the Turks on the spit, and served with pilaff. The khoja greatly appreciated the gift, and, in accordance with the rules of Oriental politeness, he begged the giver to remain and partake of the feast.

The khoja's feast over, the giver of the lamb departed, but the taste of the good things he had eaten evidently remained with him, for he again visited the khoja next day and, of course, was invited to share the remains of the lamb and pilaff with the usual hearty "Welcome! Welcome!"

A few days later several people called on the khoja and, though totally unkown to him, introduced themselves as being neighbours of the man who had given the lamb. They also were greeted by the holy and hospitable ecclesiastic with a cheerful "Welcome! Welcome!" and invited to stay to dinner. The meal was a very meagre one, but full justice was nevertheless done it by the friends of the person who had presented the lamb.

A few days later yet another batch of people came and introduced themselves to the khoja as friends of the neighbours of the man who had presented him with the lamb.

The khoja welcomed them with all his usual warmth, and, when meal-time came round, he had a small saucepan of water served to them. The friends of the neighbours of the giver of the lamb looked somewhat aghast at this scanty fare, and inquired with anxiety what it meant. The khoja told them in all seriousness that the saucepan was a child of the pot wherein the lamb had been roasted, and that the water it contained was taken from the same spring wherefrom came the water to make the pilaff that had been served with the roasted lamb.

On hearing this, the friends of the neighbours of the giver of the lamb got up and departed, and the khoja wished them God-speed, saying, "May Allah give you health, the greatest of all blessings, and may He not withhold from you the power to understand!"

St. George's Day, the first day of Spring (Hedralis), is a day of great innocent rejoicing in the whole of Turkey. From early dawn every available means of conveyance—principally bullock-carts and springless carriages—is engaged for the day. In Constantinople, men, women, and children start off in private family groups to the Sweet Waters of

Europe and the Sweet Waters of Asia to spend the entire day sitting on the grass, and making peaked head-coverings for themselves with narcissi. These all the children wear, and they return in the evening singing songs, and glad that they have paid their tribute to the dawn of Spring. The carts and carriages are also decorated with branches of trees, and all the people are happy.

The Sweet Waters of Asia is on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus near Anatoli Hissar (the castle of Asia). The Sultan has there a kiosk to which he retires when winter has come to an end. He amuses himself by shooting and by various other sports, some of them formerly very coarse. On the first day of spring the Turks go to the Sweet Waters of Asia in large numbers. Those who live on the European side go in caiques or light boats, which skim the Bosphorus like the *yèlqowan.** From along the Asiatic shore folk come in *arabas* or carts. An *araba* forms a conspicuous object in the plate here reproduced. It is a carved and springless wooden coach or cart (it really partakes of the nature of both) and is drawn by oxen whose white locks between the horns are stained with *henna*. Round the huge necks of these beasts are suspended amulets of bright blue beads which are supposed to guard their wearers from the evil eye. To

* Literally "wind-chaser." But these birds are commonly called "souls or the damned,"—why, I cannot imagine. It is unpleasant, in any case, to have a bird with such a name touch one ominously with the tip of its wing when one has swum half-way across the Bosphorus and is tired by the physical exertion, as well as terrified by the dark historical memories which haunt that tremendous chasm, and which seem to assail one suddenly and altogether, like evil spirits, when one is farthest from land. That was the experience of the present writer on more than one occasion. The *yèlqowan* is a well-known aquatic bird peculiar to the Bosphorus. It always flies in flocks, and skims the water at great speed.

guard the contents of the *araba* from the evil eye other means were formerly employed—to wit, a number of black eunuchs with drawn sabres, who menaced with instant death anyone who approached the line of march. Need I say that the contents of these curtained and incommodious vehicles were and are bevies of beauty, being in fact the harems of the Sultan and the great pashas?

The well-to-do families will on this occasion roast their lambs, and boil their pilaff, and feast. As a rule they enjoy these banquets to the fullest extent, though in no case does any beverage but pure water ever pass their lips. This water is, however, of a kind that Turkey is alone blest with—limpid, cold, and light. How enjoyable it is to have a glass of such water with a cup of coffee and a cigarette!

The khoja once had a lamb given to him just before St. George's Day, and, on hearing of this, some of his poorer and less reputable friends persuaded him to invite them to the Spring feast, and to slaughter the lamb for the same occasion. They told him that there was no use in his keeping the lamb any longer, for the day after St. George's Day would be the Day of Judgment. The khoja, concluding that perhaps they might be right, killed the lamb and carried it on his back to his friends, that they might roast it on a spit, and then eat it, and pay due tribute to Spring.

The day grew warm and, before the feast began, the guests took off some of their clothes and lay down to sleep, whilst the khoja attended to the roasting of the lamb. But, seeing that the fire was getting low, the resourceful ecclesiastic cast all the clothes of his sleeping friends into the flames. On awakening they all performed "Namaaz" (the mid-day prayer) together, and then they naturally looked around for their clothes. But their coats and mantles were all missing, and they inquired of the khoja what had become of them.

The khoja innocently told them that he had burned them all, but that this need not distress them or disturb their pleasures in the least. "To-day you may feast," quoth the holy man, cheerfully, "and as the day after to-morrow will be the day of the Resurrection, none of you will need any clothes." *

* Some critical persons may object that in this story the learned khoja, who is elsewhere represented as living in the time of the Tartar Emperor, Tímúr-i Leng (Timur the Lame or Tamerlane) and eke of Saladin, appears before us as a Turkish inhabitant of an Ottoman Constantinople. But I refuse to argue with such objectors. I simply say: "Well, if the khoja did live five hundred and ninety-one years, what of that? He deserved to live even longer."

I would also recommend to such censorious readers the numerous passages in the perspicuous Book which refer in withering language to the incredulous. In the Sura entitled "Cattle" it is said: "The Unbelievers will say, This is nothing but silly fables of ancient times. And they will forbid others from believing therein, and will retire afar from it; but they will destroy their own souls only, and they are not sensible thereof. If thou didst see when they shall be set over the fire of hell?" And again, "They who destroy their own souls are those who will not believe." And yet again, in the Sura entitled "The Family of Imran"—"Verily, Allah loveth not the unbelievers."

THE KHOJA FEIGNS DEATH

A GOOD many of the anecdotes relating to the khoja tell how he often feigned death, from the day his wife taught him how to distinguish a dead person from a living one. She had informed him that it was a very easy matter, for a dead person always had cold feet and cold hands.

On his way to the mountains one day for wood he felt that both his feet and hands were cold and concluded that he must be a dead man. Dismounting from his ass he lay down on the ground, but wolves soon appeared on the scene, and would have devoured both the ass and the khoja, were it not for the holy man's vigorous defence of himself and his property. So vigorous was this defence that, by the time the pack had been driven off, the hands and feet of the khoja had become so warm that he concluded he must be alive after all.

On another occasion while the khoja was traversing a desolate plain which had the reputation of being haunted by brigands, he suddenly saw a number of horsemen riding towards him. Overcome by terror, the holy man immediately rushed into a cemetery close by, took off his clothes, entered a tomb, and lay down. The horsemen had perceived him, however, and, riding up to the tomb, one of them asked him in a loud voice what he was doing there. "As you can see for yourselves," the khoja immediately answered, "I am one of the dead



Sébah

SCUTARI CEMETERY

To face page 60

belonging to this graveyard, and I have just come in from a walk."

When the khoja made his last will he specially requested that he should be placed in an *old* tomb. Asked why he made such a strange request, he replied: "When the angels come to question me, I shall tell them that I and my tomb are very old,—and that, owing to extreme old age, I myself am as deaf as the tomb-stone."

After taking a short cut through a graveyard one day the khoja fell into an ancient tomb, and, wishing to experience the feelings of the dead, he made for a while no effort to rise, but lay still where he had fallen. He lay there with his mind concentrated on eternity, when the sudden tinkling of bells disturbed the solemnity of the graveyard and nearly scared the life out of the khoja, who suddenly jumped up in great alarm under the impression that the bells which he heard announced the Day of Judgment.

As a matter of fact the sound proceeded from the little ornamental bells attached to the loads and the harness of a passing caravan of camels. The sudden appearance of the khoja from the tomb frightened the whole caravan, making the timid beasts rush hither and thither in great confusion, with the result that the men in charge of the caravan experienced much annoyance and loss of time.

As soon as they had quieted the camels, however, they turned angrily on the innocent cause of all this trouble and beat him black and blue with their sticks. Nor did they stop even when the khoja assured them that he was a dead man and had merely come out for a walk.

With tears in his eyes the poor khoja ran home after this drubbing, and when his wife asked him where he had been,

"Peace, woman," he replied tartly, "I have been both dead and in the tomb." Not to be silenced even by this reply, his wife then asked what there was to be seen in the other world, whereunto the khoja answered: "It is both comfortable and pleasant in the other world, but one thing you must not do,—you must not frighten the camels. If you do, the camel-drivers will beat you."

THE KHOJA'S ASS

THE ass of Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín plays an important part in many of that devout and comical man's adventures. Of the very many tales which relate to the quadruped in question, I shall confine myself to the following, which are frequently told :

It is said that three very wise men came from further east to the country of Sultan Sala-ed-din. They were priests, and were versed in all learning, and the Sultan invited them to accept the only true faith—the Mohammedan faith—and thus ensure their eternal salvation. The wise men were not averse from embracing Islam, but they would not do so until somebody would give them a satisfactory answer to three questions which they would ask. The Sultan agreed to this, and summoned all the wise men of his kingdom to attend and give answers to the questions.

The answers given, however, were neither convincing nor satisfactory. The Sultan was greatly mortified at this, and the learned priests were in some danger of his wrath. They mollified Sala-ed-din, however, by telling him that Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín could answer the questions if anybody could. The Sultan at once gave orders to the Tartar messengers to seek and forthwith bring into his presence this Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín.

The Sultan's orders were communicated with all speed to the khoja, who immediately saddled his ass, mounted it, and followed the guides. As soon as the khoja was brought into

the presence of the Sultan, he gave that potentate his blessing, and asked why it had pleased the Elect of Heaven, the Commander of the Faithful, to summon him. Thereupon he was informed that all the learned men had been unable to answer the three questions that the three wise men from the East had put to them, and that the last hope of getting these savants to voluntarily accept the true faith was in the khoja's being able to answer those questions, and thus to save the Empire from shame.

"What are the questions, O Successor of the Prophet?" asked the khoja. The first was: "Where is the middle of the earth?" The khoja immediately dismounted from his ass, and, pointing to that animal's left hind leg, said that the middle of the earth was exactly under that hoof. If anyone doubted it, added the khoja, he had but to measure and he would see that the statement was correct.

The second question was: "How many stars are there?" To this the khoja immediately replied: "Exactly the same number as there are hairs upon my ass; and if the three wise men doubt this, they have only to count those hairs and to compare their number with the number of the stars—which they undoubtedly must know, or they would not ask the question."

The third question was: "How many hairs are there in the beard of the eldest of the three wise men?" To this question the khoja at once replied: "Exactly the same number as in the tail of my ass; and, in proof of the accuracy of what I say, I am ready and willing to pull a hair from my ass's tail for every hair that is pulled out of the wise man's beard."

The wise men were not disposed to have the khoja's assertions put to the proof, so they willingly embraced Islam.

On another occasion a neighbour came to the khoja and asked him for the loan of his ass. The khoja said: "Please wait and I will ask the ass if he is willing to be lent to you."

In a short time the holy man returned and told the neighbour that his ass refused to be lent, and had said: "If you lend me to your neighbour I shall overhear a great many scandalous things about your wife." "And," added the khoja, "*that* would be embarrassing."

One day the khoja's ass strayed, and its owner sought it, inquiring of all the persons he met if they had seen his ass. One of the persons he asked replied by way of a joke, "Yes, I have seen him. He is the kadi in such-and-such a town"; whereupon the khoja praised Allah, and said: "I was sure he would be a kadi, for when I taught him the principles of the Sacred Law I noticed that his ears were always open."

The khoja was often troubled by people who wanted to borrow his ass for this or that purpose. On one occasion when a neighbour asked for the loan of it, the khoja said, somewhat curtly, "He is not at home." It so chanced, however, that at that very moment the ass brayed a prodigious bray, whereupon the surprised borrower exclaimed: "Why, it seems, then, that the ass *is* at home." To this the khoja answered, stroking his grey beard: "Strange, that you should believe the ass in preference to me. Pay reverence at least to my age."

The khoja was asked on one occasion to convey thirteen donkeys to a certain village. The donkeys were counted over carefully to him, but when, after riding a few miles, he counted them over himself, it was evident that one of them was missing. He thereupon dismounted in great dismay,

counted them once more, and found that they were all there—thirteen in all. Remounting, he continued his journey, satisfied that ill-fortune had not attended him, and that none of the donkeys had strayed. On arriving at the village, however, he again counted the donkeys carefully, and found that one had disappeared, for there were only twelve. His consternation was great, and in all haste he again dismounted and counted the animals. To his relief he again found that there were thirteen in all. He proceeded joyfully to the house of the villager who was to receive the donkeys, but his joy was damped by the discovery that, whenever he counted the donkeys as he rode along, he could only make out twelve. But the owner audibly counted thirteen ; and it is said that to the day of his death the khoja marvelled at this inexplicable experience.

THE KHOJA AND THE BURGLARS

THE tales told of Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín's adventures with robbers are very numerous, and are frequently quoted in conversation by Greeks, Turks, and Armenians. One night the holy, but impecunious, man heard some one moving cautiously about his room, and, far from becoming alarmed, he cordially greeted the unknown and earnestly begged him to strike a light. The thief was so startled at this unusual request that he betrayed himself, and asked in astonishment why the khoja wished him to strike a light.

"Oh, fear nothing," said the khoja in a reassuring tone, "I only wished to see your face that I might worship it, for truly you must be a very great man when you attempt to find in the dark what I am unable to find in the daytime, though I am constantly looking for it."

On another occasion a thief entered by night into the humble abode of the khoja, seized everything portable which it contained, made it all up into a bundle, placed this bundle on his back, and made off with it. The khoja chanced, however, to see him going off, so he followed the thief till the latter reached his destination. This destination was the thief's own house, and when the thief entered it the khoja went in after him, to the great alarm of the other, who asked the venerable

man what he wanted. Whereunto the khoja innocently replied by asking another question. "What?" said he; "Have we not moved to this house to-day?"

On still another occasion somebody robbed the khoja of a small sum of money. So in his prayers to Allah the holy man frequently alluded to the iniustice whereof he was the victim. He even went to the mosque and made a great outcry, a pitiful outcry, and he kept it up not only the whole of that day but also the whole of the succeeding night. At last the people felt great compassion for the khoja, and somebody suggested that each should contribute as much as he conveniently could to the holy man's wants. A collection was accordingly made, and though small it exceeded the sum which had been stolen.

The khoja wondered at this, and marvelled that Allah should have inspired strangers to take compassion on him in such a practical way. He repeatedly expressed his gratitude to the Most High, and wondered when Allah would again have compassion on him, for he did not think it a very painful occupation to weep all day and all night and in the end receive such handsome compensation.

An adventure that is very frequently told—in fact it has given rise to a proverb in the East "Yorgan meselessi" (the question of the quilt)—deals with the manner in which the khoja lost his only quilt.

The khoja and his wife were in bed when a great noise and rushing about of people in the street outside disturbed their slumbers. The khoja listened to this commotion for a time without getting up, but finally his curiosity could no longer be restrained, so he wrapped the quilt around his shoulders and rushed off with the crowd. His wife screamed

after him to return, but he continued to go with the crowd until suddenly a thief snatched the quilt off the khoja's back and made off with it. In a short time the khoja came back crestfallen and shivering with the cold.

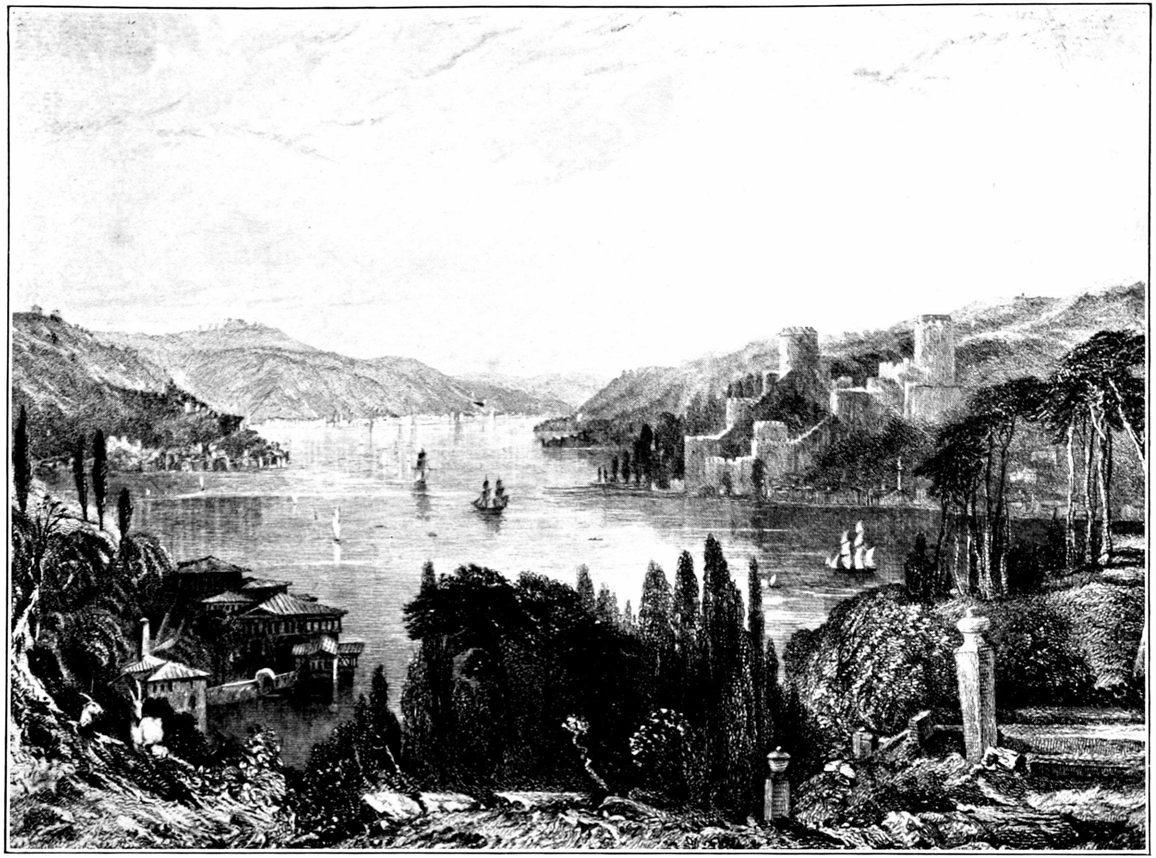
"What was the row about?" asked his wife, burning with curiosity.

"Hush, woman!" returned the khoja in a feeble voice. "Don't you see that the whole question was about our quilt?"

THE KHOJA AS MAYOR

THE khoja, simple-minded and all as he was, once attained the dignity of bash-reïs, or mayor, of the town in which he lived. The people who elected him rejoiced that the worthy ecclesiastic had at last received public recognition of the unselfish and disinterested manner wherein he had always discharged the duties of his sacred calling, but the wealthy and high-born sneered at the very idea of such a common person as the khoja wearing with any grace or dignity the fur-lined coat of honour which went with the office of mayor.

It was, however, incumbent on the town to formally recognize him as mayor, and to invite him in that capacity to a banquet. It was one of those public dinners, common enough in the East, where it is somewhat difficult to tell who is the host and who are the guests. The only thing certain was that the khoja was not paying for it—as he had no money. The invitations were issued in the name of the khoja's predecessor in office, and in due time the names of all those invited were submitted to the new mayor with the request that he would be kind enough to say if he wished all of the proposed guests to be present at the banquet. The khoja, good and simple man, perused these names of high-born and wealthy individuals, and said, "How can I either refuse or agree to dine with any of these gentlemen? I do not know any of them. Not one of them has ever broken bread at my table, nor have I ever had the honour to break bread at their



ROUMELI HESSAR, OR THE CASTLE OF EUROPE: ON THE BOSPHORUS

To face page 70

tables. It would not be right for me to say that I refuse this one or accept that one, but as they all seem to wish it I welcome all of them to the banquet. Please inform these guests, therefore, that I shall be greatly honoured by their company."

On the night of the banquet the khoja put on for the first time in his life the coat of honour, and walked with a stateliness that was worthy of imitation by kings. Neither to the right nor to the left did he look, nor did he even once answer salutations, nor give a sign of recognition to the passers-by—a most unusual way, indeed, for Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín to behave.

When he arrived at the house where the banquet was to be held he took no notice of the profound salaams paid him by the other guests. With stately tread he entered the banqueting-hall, muttering meantime as if to some invisible person who accompanied him.

"What rudeness! What vulgarity!" he was heard to say, "A shepherd would know better! Common sense, not to speak of the most ordinary gratitude, should teach you how to act on an occasion like this! Appreciate these honours that are being bestowed upon you, unsought! Make immediate obeisance lest I get angry!"

The guests looked at each other and wondered what on earth had happened to the poor khoja. Decidedly, the dizzy elevation to which he had attained had been too much for him. Some expressed pity in their looks: some expressed scorn: but, unmoved alike by their sympathy and by their contempt, the khoja stood like a statute amongst them. Finally the retiring mayor, in whose house the banquet was being held, approached the khoja and politely asked him if he would be pleased to take the seat of honour at his right and at the head of the banqueting table.

The khoja sat down as he had been told, and the guests

were struck dumb by his immovable face and blank stare. The food was brought and naturally offered first to the khoja, but, alas ! that holy man never moved, but again muttered as if to some invisible person. " Such rudeness ! " said he, " such upbringing man has never witnessed ! Take of the food and eat so that the people who were invited in your honour may also eat and enjoy the gifts of Allah ! "

The astonished guests exchanged inquiring looks with each other but no one spoke. Finally the khoja opened his mouth and, in despair, assured the assembly that the fault was not his, that he had done his best. Taking hold of the furred cuff of his coat of honour, he then pushed it towards the plate saying, " Eat, rude and ignorant emblem of dignity and power. What ? You still refuse ! Well, then, I wash my hands of all responsibility for your unspeakable behaviour this evening ! " whereupon, to the astonishment of all present, the khoja moved rapidly towards the door, the guests simultaneously rising to their feet with Oriental politeness.

Just as he reached the threshold, the khoja turned and said to the host, " Effendiler, I am more wounded than words can tell to see you treated in this ungrateful manner. You invited to the banquet the mayor's coat, and I, your humble servant, brought that coat thither, but, as all of ye have witnessed, the base garment did not know how to behave itself. Had such an honour been paid to me, the memory of it would have helped me through life and even in the dread hour of death. To my humble table I invite you all, even though it be only bread and water that I have to offer you. In the name of Allah I invite you all to break bread with me ! "

THE KHOJA'S FAST

THE fast of the Ramazan begins with the new moon and ends with the new moon, so that, as a rule, it covers a period of at least thirty days. Its advent is usually announced, according to the importance of the place, either by the firing of a cannon or the beating of a drum, but, before the cannon can be fired or the drum beaten, an order from the Governor must be issued, and this order cannot be given unless two or three witnesses swear and sign an affidavit that they have seen the new moon.

The gun is always fired or the drum always beaten at least twenty-four hours before an ordinary mortal is privileged to see the first streak of the new moon. Nevertheless, I have been assured repeatedly that the witnesses always see the reflection of the moon in water before swearing the affidavit upon which the Government takes action.

To see the future in water is an old custom, which was known to the ancient Greeks as divination by water, and the witnesses perhaps divine the coming of the moon in this way. Full twenty-four hours before they declare they have seen the moon, they sit gazing into a sheet of water which is placed so as to reflect the orb of night. When they catch sight of that rising orb, they hurry to the Governor and swear that they have seen the moon. Whereupon the drum (*dow-ool*) or the cannon (*top*) announce the fast.

On one occasion, Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín, feeling a little lukewarm in his religious enthusiasm (as the very best of us do

at times) did not wish to adhere rigidly to the very strict rules of the fast and said to himself: "If I do not see the moon, surely Allah will not expect me to fast." Consequently he carefully refrained from looking towards the Eastern horizon, and, though he knew that the drum would shortly announce the beginning of the fast, he tried to convince himself that this would not matter if he had not actually seen the moon with his own eyes. Filled with these subtle temptations of the Evil One, he proceeded to the well in order to draw water for ablutions and drinking.

The water was still, and ere the bucket had reached its dark surface the khoja perceived, glimmering in the well beneath him, that thin golden semicircle which he had been so anxious *not* to see. Almost simultaneously the beating of a drum and the sound of a cannon announced that the fast of the Ramazan had begun. The khoja thought deeply and marvelled much at the ways of the Almighty, but he was never able to explain how he could ever have seen in the well what he could not see in the heavens. He drew forth the water, however, and prayed in conformity with the prescribed Mohammedan law. But he drank not of the water, he merely washed his mouth, wondering all the time at the inscrutable decrees of providence, and often saying to himself: "Verily, verily, the ways of God are not the ways of man! He is the Al-Alim! He is the Allah Taâla! (Most High God!) I know now that Allah is he who heareth and knoweth. Verily, there is no God but God, the living, the self-subsisting."

Still the khoja, though he wished to conform, was determined not to exceed the fixed number of days. The moon is generally visible twenty-eight days, sometimes twenty-nine, but when thirty days are completed the feast of the Baïram begins. The khoja therefore decided to keep an



TOMBS OF FIRST MARTYRS

To face page 74

accurate account of the fast days so that he should not by any chance continue fasting when by rights he ought to be feasting.

With this object in view he procured an earthenware pot and he also collected thirty pebbles. At sunset each day he deposited a pebble in the pot. "When all the thirty pebbles are in the pitcher"—so the good man reasoned—"then the feast of the Baïram will have begun."

When most of the fast had passed, the khoja was once asked how many more days remained. Promising to let his friends know the exact number, he went to his pitcher to count the stones. He never thought of counting the stones that he had not yet placed in the pitcher. And he did not know that, in imitation of her worthy parent, his daughter had also been casting into the pitcher other pebbles of her own collecting. The khoja counted the pebbles but their number indicated many moons, and this embarrassed the good man greatly for he knew not what to say to his people. Finally, however, he struck an average that seemed to him reasonable. This average was forty-five, so he told his people that it was the forty-fifth day of the month of Ramazan.

No degree of respect could hide from the people the fact that a month has but thirty days, and they told their host so. The khoja admitted that he could not understand the mystery, but he assured them that he spoke the truth, for he himself had placed a pebble in the pitcher at sun-down every day, and there were no fewer than a hundred and fifty pebbles in the pitcher. And if he had told them forty-five he was, he considered, well within the truth. The khoja privately concluded, however, that it was very unwise to see the moon in the well before he could see it in the heavens. "But," as he piously added, "the ways of the Almighty are not the ways of man! —Verily, Allah is mighty and wise!"

DEATH OF THE KHOJA'S WIFE

KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN frequently told his disciples that they must think well before acting, and he modestly proposed himself to them as a good example of a man who, before doing anything, always meditated profoundly on the possible consequences of what he was going to do.

"Most men," he said, "thrash or punish the water-carrier after the pitcher is broken. This is very foolish, however, for it neither repairs the pitcher nor replaces the water brought to perform the necessary ablutions. Water I need five times a day, before I humbly prostrate myself before the creator and adore Him in His nine and ninety different attributes, and my pitcher, *Máshá'lláh!* has not yet been broken. Why? The explanation is very simple. I always punish my boy severely, while giving him at the same time many wise admonitions, *before* he goes to the stream for the water. On his return I reward him with kind words, and never omit to explain to him the good he has done by bringing back a pitcher full of water. Most, nay nearly all, men are fools, and they thrash the boy when the pitcher is broken as if *that* would repair it.

"Sometimes my wife goes to the stream for water, and, as I cannot thrash her, I employ other means to save my pitcher. With women it is very easy to find such means, as, according to them, men, especially husbands, are never out of their debt. So you promise to pay one of the imaginary debts you owe them, and the pitcher is not broken."

Whilst the holy man was thus holding sage discourse with his disciples, the hour for evening prayer approached, but as if with feminine perversity to belie his teaching, the khoja's wife did not appear with the pitcher. Finally, both the khoja and his disciples became anxious, as the time of the "azan" (call to prayer) was close at hand. For, no matter what happened, they must all pray when that call was heard, and, before praying, they must all wash. Finally, the muezzin was heard, giving out the solemn summons to prayer from the lofty summit of the minaret, but the khoja's wife had not yet come. The disciples kept their thoughts to themselves, and uttered no word. Each preferred that one of the others should give voice to the fear they all entertained, for well they knew that the khoja's wife was a good and holy woman, and that she would never miss the hour of prayer were she alive. They had not long to wait for the painful silence to be broken, as a messenger soon entered with the pitcher, which had not been broken, saying he feared that whoever had gone for the water must have fallen into the river.

A mournful procession, composed of the khoja and his disciples, now proceeded to the river in silent and dignified haste. There, sure enough, were signs to indicate that the unhappy woman had fallen into the swiftly running river, and that undoubtedly she was at that moment many miles away down the stream. The khoja was stricken with grief, and his respectful disciples bowed their heads in silent sympathy.

"Allah! Allah!" the holy man at length cried, "Why hast thou taken her from me in my old age? Thou knewest her mission, and why we wanted the water, for all things are known unto Thee. No better woman ever lived in this world, but now, alas! Thou hast taken her from me. Thou hast taken her to paradise, where her youth and beauty will be restored, but Thou hast left me, O Allah! alone."

"It is true," continued the khoja, when his first transports of grief had somewhat moderated, "it is true that the sages of old said that woman is gifted with divine inspiration once, and once only, every forty years (*Kirk-yil-de-bir*). They always held, in consequence, that it would be imprudent for a man not to consult a woman and follow her advice once in every forty years.

"Allah! Allah! I consulted my wife every day. Nay, I frequently consulted her several times a day, for I feared that the divine inspiration which comes upon her once every forty years might suddenly descend at any moment. But I must admit that never in my life have I had a divine revelation from her. On one occasion I not only consulted her, but nearly followed her advice. Allah be praised! I had the divine inspiration *not* to do what she told me, however, for had I done so, I should not be here to-day to mourn over this calamity. . . . Yet perhaps," he added, after a pause, "even that would have been better than this dire misfortune of losing my wife, to say nothing of letting the hour of the azan go past without prayer."

All the disciples sighed audibly at this remark, and all of them wondered what advice it was which his wife gave him, and which it would have been fatal for him to follow. But, naturally, they did not like to question him at such a moment.

"Yes," continued the khoja, in a reminiscent tone, "when Tímúr-i-Leng (Timur the Lame) conquered our land, bringing death and destruction thereunto, all the people who remained hastened to pay homage to the great conqueror. Past our humble door, day after day, went camel caravans laden with presents both rare and costly, as well as flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, and armies of servants carrying still more treasure; and lo! I beheld envy in my wife's eye, mingled with fear for both of us should we not be able to do likewise.

But I said nothing, for I knew that she could not long keep silent. And in a short time my patience was rewarded.

" 'O khoja,' said she at last, 'hasten thou likewise to do homage to Tímúr-i-Leng, lest some evil befall us. One kind act averts calamity and charms away danger, even as the amulet saves us from the envious eye.'

" I looked attentively at her, secretly thinking that this might perchance be the inspired moment for which I had waited patiently for so many long years. But there was nothing in our home worthy of being presented to a beggar, much less to a conqueror, and that conqueror Tímúr. This wonderful woman read my thoughts, however, as I looked around the house, for, said she, 'Amongst all the presents that have passed our door I did not see any fruit. Now in our little garden we have choice fruit. Go, khoja, and present Tímúr with some of our quinces. The day is hot, and it would be pleasant for him to quench his thirst with that delicious fruit, which would assure him of your own and your disciples' loyalty. Go, khoja, and *In-shâ-Allah!* it will be well for us!'

" I dared to differ mildly, telling my wife that perhaps Tímúr-i-Leng would prefer some of our figs. I pointed out that there was not another fig-tree—a Sultan Selim fig-tree—in the whole of Caramania, and that perhaps such rare figs might be worthy of his acceptance, for certainly there was not another Tímúr in the whole of Caramania.

" My wife tried to have her way, but, Allah be praised! I climbed the fig-tree, and, having selected the best fruit, started on my day's journey. I was privileged, being a turbaned khoja, and was shown at once into the presence of the mighty man. With a few well-chosen words I presented my figs, and forgot none of the compliments and assurances of loyalty that one of the conquered should pay to the conqueror.

" 'What does that dog want, and what does he bring me?'

were the words I heard at the end of my speech. 'Tie him to a tree,' continued Tímúr, 'and, learned and all as he may be, he will soon find that pleasantries of this kind are not to be tolerated.'

"No sooner was I tied to the tree than those beautiful Sultan Selim figs were thrown with great violence at my face. I could not help laughing, for I thought of the quinces, and what would have happened to me had I followed my wife's advice. For, as you know, the fig known as the Sultan Selim or royal fig has only very fine seeds. I was ordered to explain why I laughed, and when I did explain, Tímúr, being a wise man, ordered me to be released at once.

"Little did I think this morning, O my wife, that I would not see you in life again. But I must at least gaze upon your face once more, even if that face be the face of a corpse." And the khoja turned mournfully and sadly, his disciples following him, to wend his way *up* the river. The disciples glanced at each other mournfully for they feared that the holy man had suddenly lost his reason. After some time the eldest disciple took courage, and, touching the master on the shoulder, respectfully said: "O Khoja! Believe in our sincerity and pardon my interruption, but if you would look upon the face of your wife again, might we say that it is *down* this running river that you should go to look for her, and not *up* the stream."

The khoja turned a reproachful gaze on his disciples and said: "Is this the only result of all my teaching? This is the greatest blow of all. Know then, young man—for you certainly are young, being only two score and two—that if there are two ways to go, the one is right, the other wrong. Man invariably takes the wrong road, but once in every forty years woman takes the right road. The question is how to know when the one divinely inspired action of a woman

takes place ; then you may follow. If my wife, brethren, is in that river she is up at the head, at the source," and the khoja continued his journey, his disciples mournfully and respectfully following him.

[Note by authors. The conclusion of this tale is purposely told with some obscurity by the story-tellers. The idea of the saintly khoja seems to be that, since his wife did nothing extraordinary and therefore divinely inspired during her life, her only chance of distinguishing herself was by floating upstream instead of downstream while she was drowning. On the face of the story-teller at this stage there is a suggestion that the hard-hearted old khoja was really rather glad to get rid of his wife and afraid that if he went downstream he might see her clinging to a log and be compelled to rescue her.]

THE TOMB OF KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN

ALL over Turkey there are cemeteries, so many cemeteries that in many places the land of the living has been encroached upon, and a once fertile country has become naught but a country of the dead. The traveller in the Far East will remember that exactly the same thing can be said of China. And in all the old Turkish cemeteries there are tombs of saints or holy men who lived and died in a manner that justifies the Oriental in paying homage to them, or in supplicating their intervention with Allah.

Many of the cemeteries are now traversed by roads and houses which have been built over thousands of graves, but the grave of a saint is always preserved and always sure to have its daily visitors. In some cases a wall is built around the spot where the saint lies buried, a barred opening being left to permit of the visitors seeing the tomb. Here, when the sun has set, you will notice the supplicants arriving. Very often they are women ; and, having said their prayers to Allah, or made known their desires to the saint, and supplicated his intercession, the pilgrims generally light a candle and place it in the barred opening. Sometimes it is only the stump of a candle, sometimes a whole candle, according to the position and wealth of the supplicant. At no hour of the night is the tomb of the saint in darkness. Should all



THE OLD TOMB OF KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍN AT KONIA (EXTERIOR)

To face page 82

the candles burn themselves out, there would still remain the oil-lamp which hangs in front of the tomb, and which is perpetually tended by dervishes or holy men belonging to what would be called in the West a religious order. This lamp is always sure to continue burning till the sun has risen. The belated traveller in the great Turkish wildernesses will frequently notice a little light burning feebly in the dead of night, far from any habitation; and, when he approaches nearer, he will see that it is an oil-lamp burning before some ancient tomb.

There are many holy tombs, however, before which no night-lights burn, and where no candles are ever lit by penitents. The saints in these sepulchres are honoured in a different manner. One such tomb is situated at the top of Roumelie Hissar Hill on the Bosphorus and in the precincts of the Becktaché Téké or Monastery of the Dervishes. It marks the spot where the first martyrs in the army of Mohamet the Conqueror fell fighting the Greeks, before Constantinople was taken. By the side of the modest little gravestone which marks this resting-place is a small scrub-oak, the branches of which are covered with little bits of cotton-wool and silk of all colours. Each of these knotted rags indicates that a supplicant prayed at that sepulchre, for, at the end of a prayer, it is customary to add a knot to the many which flutter on the scrub-oak. Visitors will always notice that some of the bits of cloth are fresh in contrast to others which are withered. The fresh rags represent fresh hopes. Too often, alas! the withered rags typify hopes which are as withered as they.

The pilgrim who visits holy tombs in Spain and Italy will notice an extraordinary resemblance between the religious customs which prevail at these tombs and the customs which we have just described. The Turkish mode of attracting the

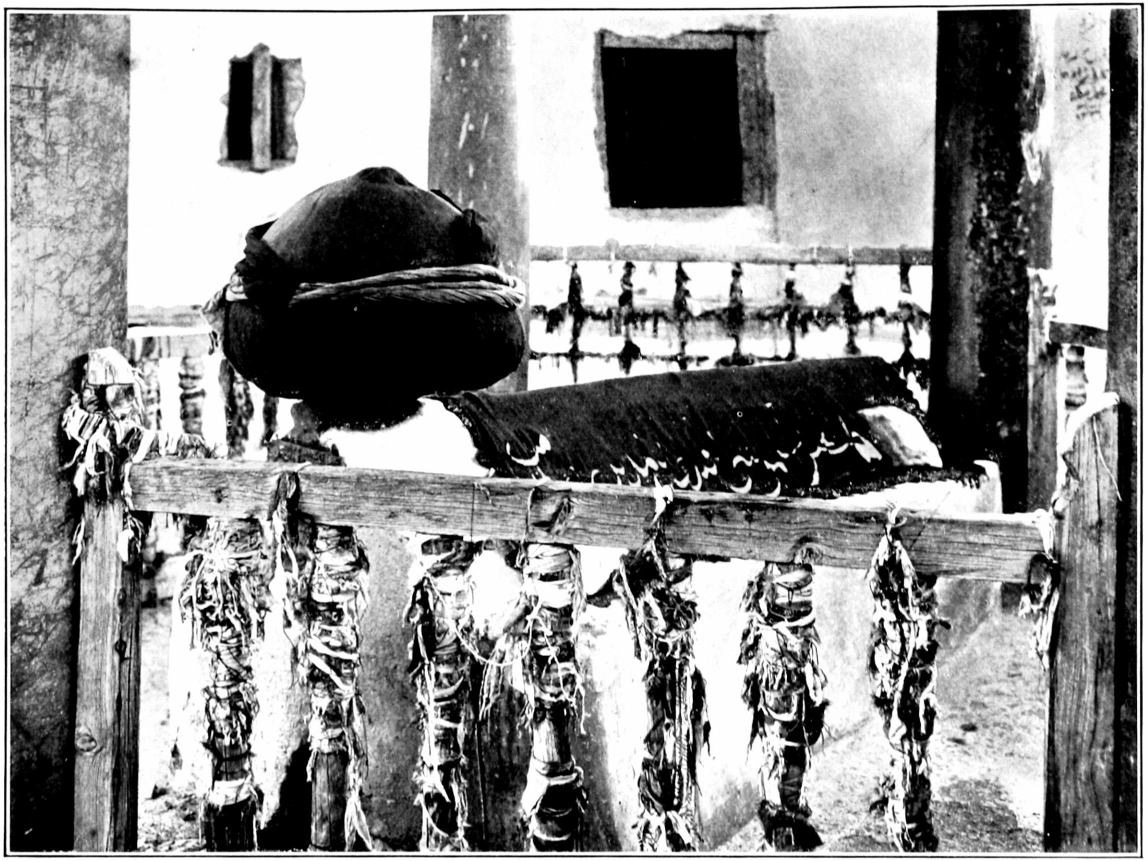
saint's attention is, however, peculiar to Turkey. The mother, the father, or the lover will come to the tomb, and, in a subdued voice, call upon the saint by name. The supplicant will then listen attentively. Round the tomb there may be a dozen persons calling on the canonized one in a stage whisper, gently knock-knock-knocking at the same time on his tomb with a tiny pebble.

When they imagine they have caught the saint's eye—I mean, of course, his ear—they open their hearts and implore his intercession. Then one by one they gently get up and depart, relieved, encouraged, full of hope. One leaves with the assurance that her child will get better. The other that her lover will return. The third that Allah will show him how to earn bread for himself and those he loves.

Even deputies and candidates for high government positions have been known to knock in this way at saints' tombs in the silence of the night, and have been heard to extol their own virtues and their superiority to other aspirants for the same post.* This gentle tap-tap-tapping with little pebbles has so filigreed the marble tombs that sometimes there is not a square inch of smooth surface left.

Among the tombs of saints that have daily and nightly visitors, men, women, and children, is that of Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín. In life he was esteemed for his helpfulness and his homely sanctity; and now for many centuries his spirit has been procuring blessings both spiritual and temporal for the people of Asia Minor. Who could count the little cloth strips of all colours and all kinds of material that adorn the palings flourishing above his tomb? And when you recollect that each strip has many knots and that each knot represents a sincere and

* I am afraid that if a British M.P. were discovered at, say 3 A.M., tapping with his latch-key at the base of some dead statesman's statue in Parliament Square, his conduct would be liable to misconstruction.



G. R. Soakian, Konia

THE OLD TOMB OF KHOJA NASR-UD-DIN AT KONIA (INTERIOR)

To face page 84

ardent prayer, you will realize what a busy time the saintly intercessor has had since he went to heaven.

The most curious thing about all this respect that is paid to Saint Nasr-ud-Dín is that obviously nobody was ever less of a saint than that stout, rubicund family man with his love of a good joke, his appreciation of the good things of life, his very ample waist, and his very slender spiritual equipment. He was, it will be remembered, once cursed for heresy by his ecclesiastical superior; and probably he was till the end of his life somewhat of a gay old heathen like Omar-i-Khayyám. As he never wrote anything, however, he was never definitely found out on this heresy question. Nevertheless, the Turks all know many of his shortcomings, for, as we have already seen, they are never tired of telling funny stories about him. Yet, with all that, they evidently prefer his intercession to that of the most ascetic dervish in the Islamic calendar. Perhaps they think that, even now, the khoja is better able to understand human frailty and to excuse it.

These remarks apply only to the lower classes. The upper classes in Turkey are all ashamed of Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín. The young Turks, the literati, the ulemàs, the diplomats and the Pashas regard him as more or less of a disgrace to the cloth—just as the official Persians regard Omar-i-Khayyám—and they always try to shift the conversation to the old hero of Plevna, or to some of the warlike Padishahs who were (in their opinion) more typically Turkish, and more of a credit to the Osmanli.

And the foreign scholars who have made a life-long study of Turkish are sometimes with them in this. They, too, dismiss the old khoja in a contemptuous sentence as "a Turkish Joe Millar." But the continual throng of pilgrims at the tomb of Nasr-ud-Dín shows that that merry gentleman was something more than this. It is certainly curious how very green the old

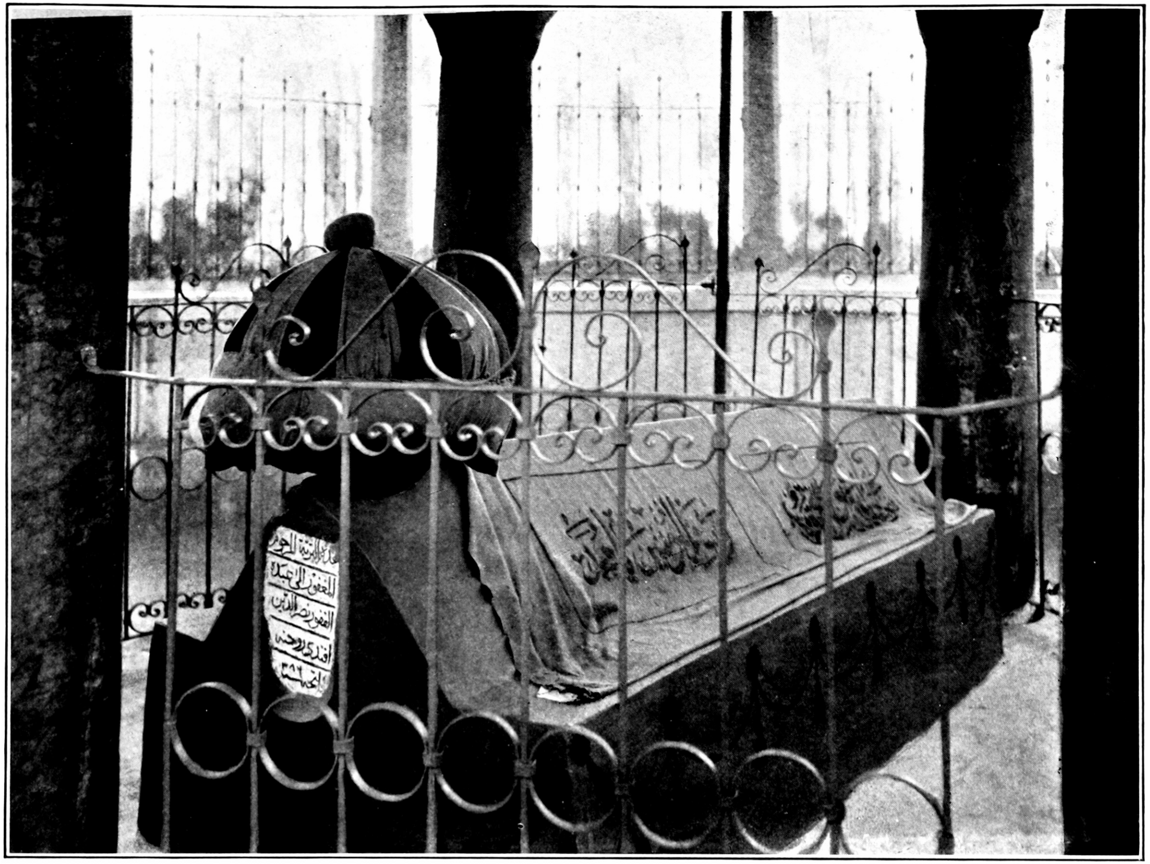
man's memory is kept, while that of many a whirling dervish and howling dervish pre-eminent in their day for mortification and sanctity has passed into oblivion. Only six or seven years ago a new tomb was erected over the grave of Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín ; but, though it is expensive and up to date, it is not architecturally so beautiful as the old tomb—in fact it looks like a Parisian newspaper kiosk in the Rue de la Paix. We have not, therefore, reproduced here the photographs of it which we obtained from Konia.

The reader may be interested in the following reference to the tomb of Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín which occurs in the "Turkey in Europe" of Sir Charles Elliot (Odysseus) :

"The tomb of the khoja may be seen to this day at Ak Shehir, in the vilayet of Konia. In the middle of a field or graveyard—I am not sure which, for I saw the site in mid-winter when everything was deep in snow—is a small domed building, partly open at the sides ; under the dome is a tomb above which hangs the enormous green turban, about the size of an ordinary umbrella, which the khoja wore in his lifetime. A small hole is left in the masonry of the grave, as he insisted on having a window through which he could look out on the world of men, and a slab which bears his name gives the year of his death as 1366 A.H., equivalent to about 1950 A.D., by which inscription he is said to have meant to puzzle future generations."

Before leaving the exhilarating subject of tombstones I should like to add some remarks on sundry points that cropped up in the course of the foregoing sketch.

I need hardly point out, in the first place, that the burning of a light before a holy tomb, altar, or picture is a custom of extreme antiquity, and is still practised very extensively both in the Roman Catholic and in the Greek Church. One form



THE NEW TOMB OF KHOJA NASR-UD-DÍŃ AT KONIA (INTERIOR VIEW)

To face page 86

of the same practice is the burning of lamps before *ikons* in the houses of all orthodox Russians. A Mohammedan friend of mine once tried to convince me that the same pious custom is observed—of all places in the world !—in the National Liberal Club of London ; and when I challenged him on the subject, he pointed in all seriousness to the shaded electric light which glows night and day before the fine oil-painting of Mr. Lloyd George which adorns the large smoke room of that institution.

The Mohammedan religious orders who indulge in the ceremonial lighting of candles before tombs, as well as in the use of both candles and incense in public worship, are known as dervishes. Some of the ceremonies of these dervishes are superficially analogous to those of extreme ritualists in the Anglican Church, but, *Allah Akbar !* Turkey also has her John Kensits and such-like " boys of the bull-dog breed " who will on no account, sir, tolerate candles in day-time. " It is never related in the traditions," a Low Church Mollah once remarked to an English diplomatist, " that our Lord the Prophet went about lighting candles on the tombs of dead dervishes. Had it been necessary or useful we should certainly have heard that he did so."

Thus, in the East as in the West, mighty religious forces act and re-act on each other. Deep calleth unto Deep. Pious people light candles and diabolical people blow them out (or *vice versa* : it really makes no difference). And, strange to say, all tends to the progress and to the religious development of this wondrous world of ours.

" Odysseus " gives the following interesting account of a visit he once paid to a dervish monastery :

" I once had an opportunity of conversing with a high functionary of the Mevlevi sect. By his request I visited him between 10 and 11 P.M., as the month was Ramazan, and

the earlier hours of the night were taken up by the ordinary Mohammedan prayers. From this house, which stood in a large courtyard, there issued a rhythmical noise like the pulsations of a steam-engine, and I wondered if there could be a factory in the neighbourhood. As I went up the staircase the mysterious noise grew louder and louder, but I could not imagine whence it proceeded until I was suddenly introduced into a large room where at least a hundred dervishes were seated, some against the walls and some on sheepskins spread in the middle of the floor, dressed in flowing garments, blue or drab, and wearing tall felt hats shaped like flower-pots. The noise was produced by these all chanting, "Ya Hú, ya Hú, ya Hú, ya Hú,"* in a low, guttural voice, which spiritual exercise they intended to continue till morning. The expression of their faces was that of men in a mesmeric trance, and not one of them seemed to notice the arrival of a stranger. In the middle a stoutish man of about forty was walking up and down. He was dressed like the others, but his shaggy yellow beard and golden spectacles made him look more like a German professor than a dancing dervish. He apologized for receiving me so late, saying, with a tolerant but weary air, that he was obliged to attend the long prayers recited in mosques after sunset during Ramazan, and I thought he also seemed rather glad to escape from his own religious ceremony. He then took me into another room which presented a very singular appearance, as it was lighted by ten silver candlesticks placed on the floor in the shape of the letter Y. There was no sofa or divan of any kind, and we sat on cushions placed on the floor. On the wall were hung some pictures of Mecca and of the Bektashi shrine at Aramsun, as well as some remarkably bad photographs which

* Hú or Huwa, the third personal pronoun in Arabic, is often used in the sense of God.

he had taken himself. He had obtained a kodak, he told me, from Paris, but with infinite difficulty, and he regretted that local prejudices did not allow him to use it freely. To my great surprise he offered me *raki*, and took some himself, though as a rule the laxest Mohammedan will at least pretend not to drink in Ramazan. He apologized for not speaking French, which he said he could read a little, and asked me if I could recommend him a good French newspaper of liberal views. Then he said that he had heard that Sir J. Redhouse had translated the Mesnevi into English. Had it produced much effect in London? He had heard that music was used in English services, as in those of the Mevlevis, and he seemed to think it would be natural that British congregations should take to dancing as well. I did not like to disappoint him by saying that I had not heard of the existence of any dancing dervishes in England, and therefore spoke of the Mohammedan Church at Liverpool. He said with some hesitation, and in a low voice, that this was not what he had meant. He did not care about the introduction of Mohammedanism into England, but he had hoped that people might have seen that the mystic principles enunciated in the Mesnevi were compatible with all religions, and could be grafted on Christianity as well as on Islam."

The authors of the present volume once visited the Tchelebi of Konia, the head of the Mevlevi, in his own monastery, and no sooner had we sat down than the holy man clapped his hands, and ordered the servant who appeared to bring what he called Frankish Sherbet. This turned out to be excellent champagne, and it was indulged in by the Tchelebi as well as by his guests.

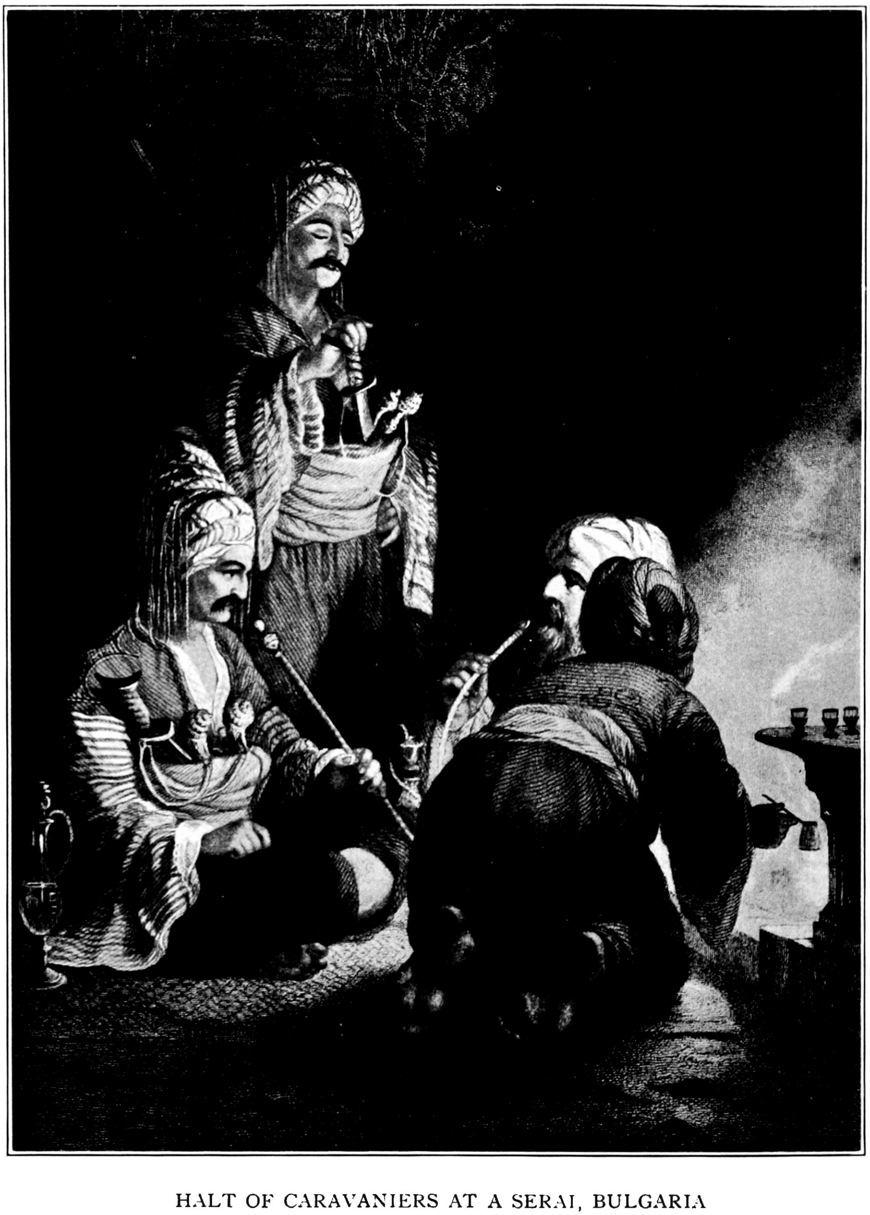
Strictly speaking, the dead cannot, according to Mohammedan tenets, be asked to intercede for one with Allah.

Allah is alone in the terrible isolation of his glory and has no connecting links with any of his creatures. There is neither Son, Madonna nor Saint to act as mediator. It would be the height of impiety to address prayers even to the Prophet. But in practice the dead *are* asked to intercede, as described in the foregoing sketch, and also in the account of Sheikh Assiferi of Latakieh.

STORIES ABOUT KHALÎFS

STORIES ABOUT KHALÎFS

The Khalîf Omar



HALT OF CARAVANIERS AT A SERAI, BULGARIA

To face page 93

THE KHALÎF OMAR

THE Khalîf Omar, one of the first khalîfs after the Prophet, is deeply venerated to this day, and is continually referred to as a lover of truth and justice. Often in the face of strong evidence he refrained from passing judgment, and this prudence led more than once to the liberation of the innocent and the punishment of the guilty. The following story is told as an instance of his wise patience in a murder case.

At the Feast of the Passover a certain Jew of Bagdad had sacrificed his sheep and was offering up his prayers, when suddenly a dog came in, and, snatching up the sheep's head, ran off with it. The Jew pursued in hot haste, forgetting in his excitement that he was still carrying the bloody knife and wearing his blood-stained apron. Still carrying the sheep's head, the dog rushed into an open doorway, followed closely by the Jew. The latter in his hurried pursuit fell over the body of what proved to be a murdered man. The murder was laid against the Jew, and witnesses swore that they had seen him coming out of the house covered with blood, and in his hand a bloody dagger. The Jew was arrested and tried, but with covered head he swore by his forefathers and children that he was innocent. Omar would not condemn him, as none of the witnesses had seen the Jew do the deed, and until further evidence had been given to prove his guilt the case was adjourned. Meanwhile, unknown to anybody, spies and detectives were set to work on the case, with the result that after a time the real murderers were discovered, condemned, and put to death, while the Jew was liberated.

STORIES ABOUT KADIS AND PASHAS

STORIES ABOUT KADIS AND PASHAS

THE KADI AND THE GOOSE

A TURK decided to have a feast, so he killed and stuffed a goose and took it to the baker to be roasted. The kadi of the village happened to pass by the oven as the baker was basting the goose, and was attracted by the pleasant and appetizing odour. Approaching the baker, the kadi said it was a fine goose, and that the smell of it made him feel quite hungry. He also suggested that the baker had better send the goose to his house. The baker expostulated, saying : " I cannot ; it does not belong to me."

The kadi assured him that was no difficulty. " You tell Ahmet, the owner of the goose, that it flew away."

" Impossible ! " said the baker. " How can a roasted goose fly away ? Ahmet will only laugh at me, your worship, and I shall be cast into prison."

" Am I not a judge ? " said the kadi. " Fear nothing ! "

At this the baker consented to send the goose to the kadi's house. When Ahmet came for his goose the baker said : " Friend, thy goose has flown away."

" Flown ? " cried Ahmet ; " What a lie ! Am I thy grandfather's grandchild that thou shouldst laugh in my beard ? "

Seizing one of the baker's large shovels, he lifted it to strike him, but, as fate would have it, the handle put out the eye of the baker's boy, and Ahmet, frightened at what he had done, ran off, closely followed by the baker and his boy, the

latter crying : " My eye ! my eye ! You have put out my eye ! "

In his hurry Ahmet knocked over a child, killing it, and the father of the child joined in the chase, calling out : " My daughter ! my daughter ! You have killed my daughter ! "

Ahmet, well nigh distracted, rushed into a mosque and up a minaret. To escape his pursuers he leapt from the parapet, and fell upon a vendor who was passing by, breaking his arm. The vendor also began pursuing him, calling out : " My arm ! my arm ! You have broken my arm ! "

Ahmet was finally caught and brought before the kadi, who was no doubt feeling contented with the world, having just enjoyed the delicious goose.

The kadi heard each of the cases brought against Ahmet, who in turn told his story truthfully as it had happened.

" A complicated matter ! " said the kadi. " All these misfortunes come from the flight of the goose, and I must refer to the book of the law to give just judgment."

Taking down a ponderous manuscript volume, the kadi turned to Ahmet and asked him what was the number of the egg which the goose had been hatched from. Ahmet said he did not know.

" Then," replied the kadi, " according to this book, such a phenomenon as the flight of a roasted goose is quite possible. If this goose was hatched from a seventh egg, and if the hatcher had also been hatched from a seventh egg, then, according to this book, it is possible, though unusual, for such a goose, even when roasted, to fly away."

" With reference to your eye," continued the kadi, addressing the baker's lad, " the book provides punishment for the removal of two eyes, but not of one, so if you will consent to your other eye being taken out, I will condemn Ahmet to have both of his removed."

The baker's lad, not appreciating the force of this argument, withdrew his claim.

Then turning to the father of the dead child, the kadi explained that the only provision for a case like this which he could find in the book of the law, was that he might take Ahmet's child in place of the one he had lost. If Ahmet had not yet got a child, the plaintiff might wait till he got one. The bereaved parent, not taking any interest in Ahmet's present or prospective children, also withdrew his case.

These cases settled, there remained but that of the vendor, who was wroth at having his arm broken. The kadi expatiated on the justice of the law and its far-seeing provisions, inasmuch as the vendor at least could claim ample compensation for having his arm broken. The book of the law provided that he might go to the top of the very same minaret, and that Ahmet must station himself on the ground below at the very spot where the vendor had stood when his arm was broken. Matters being thus arranged, the vendor might lawfully jump down and break Ahmet's arm.

"But let it be well understood," concluded the kadi, "that if you break his leg instead of his arm, Ahmet will have the right to delegate some one to jump down on you in order to break your leg."

The vendor not seeing the force of the kadi's proposal, also withdrew his claim.

Thus ended the cases of the goose, the eye, the daughter, and the arm.

THE WISE PASHA

A POOR hamàl (porter) brought to the Pasha of Stamboul his savings, consisting of a small canvas bag of medjidies (Turkish silver dollars) to be kept for him, while he was absent on a visit to his home. The pasha, being a kind-hearted man, consented, and after sealing the bag, called his steward, instructing him to keep it till the owner called for it. The steward gave the man a receipt, to the effect that he had received a sealed bag containing money.

When the poor man returned he went to the pasha and received his bag of money. On reaching his room he opened the bag, and to his horror found that it contained, instead of the medjidies he had put in it, copper piastres, which are about the same size as medjidies. The poor hamàl was miserable, his hard-earned savings gone.

He at last mustered up sufficient courage to go and put his case before the pasha. He took the bag of piastres, and with trembling voice and faltering heart he assured the pasha that though he had received his bag apparently intact, he had discovered on opening it that it contained copper piastres and not the medjidies he had put into it. The pasha took the bag, examined it closely, and after some time noticed a part that had apparently been darned by a skilful hand. The pasha told the hamàl to go away and come back in a week : in the meantime he would see what he could do for him. The grateful man departed, uttering prayers for the life and prosperity of his Excellency.



Daily Mirror

A HAMAL

To face page 100

Next morning, after the pasha had said his prayers kneeling on an expensive carpet, he took a knife and cut a long rent in the carpet. He then left his konak without saying a word to anyone. In the evening when he returned he found that the rent had been so well repaired that it was with difficulty that he discovered where it had been. Calling his steward, he demanded who had repaired his prayer-rug. The steward replied that he thought the rug had been cut accidentally by some of the servants, so he had sent to the bazaar for the darner, Mustapha, and had it mended. The steward added, by way of apology, that it was very well done.

"Send for the Mustapha immediately," said the pasha, "and when he comes bring him to my room."

When Mustapha arrived, the pasha asked him if he had repaired the rug. Mustapha at once replied that he had mended it that very morning.

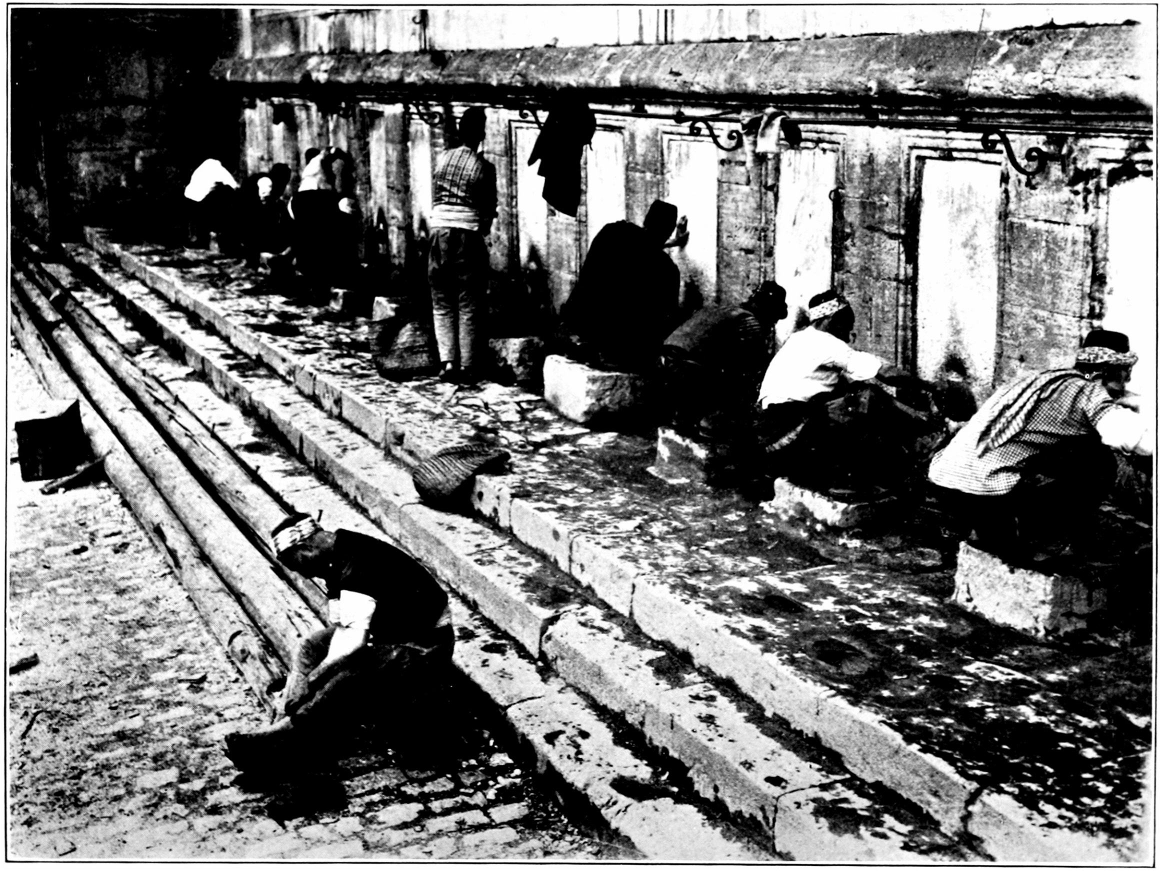
"And, indeed, you mended it very well," said the pasha; "much better than you mended that hole in the canvas bag.

Mustapha agreed, saying that it was very difficult to mend the bag as it was full of copper piastres. On hearing this, the pasha gave him backsheesh (a present) and told him to retire. The pasha then called his steward, and not only compelled him to pay the hamàl his money, but discharged the dishonest man from his service, in which he had been engaged for many years.

STORIES ABOUT CHRISTIANS

STORIES ABOUT CHRISTIANS

Isa and the Three Men
The Thirteenth Son
How the Priest knew it would Snow



Daily Mirror

TURKS PERFORMING ABLUTIONS OUTSIDE MOSQUE

To face page 105

ISA AND THE THREE MEN

SOME years ago I was travelling from Antioch to Aleppo in the company of Riza Bey (an Albanian Bey), whose adopted son is the famous Young Turk patriot and hero Enver Pasha.* To while away the tedious hours Riza Bey told me the following story:

When Hassereti Isa (Jesus) was once on His way to the mountain to pray it is said that He met a man, who accosted Him saying, "Master, whither goest Thou?"

And Isa answered, "I go to pray to the Father."

"O Prophet," quoth the man, "while praying to the Father do not forget to remember me. For years now have I prayed five times a day from Allah Ar-Rahman (the Merciful) to Az-Zaboor (the Long-suffering), yes, five times each day have I said this three-stringed chaplet and told over the beautiful ninety-nine names of Allah. See how my rosary, originally made from common beach pebbles, has become bright and worn by continuous wear until the beads now look like precious stones."

"In order not to miss the stipulated time for ablutions," continued this most pious man, "I even take two pitchers of water with me, and place one pitcher of water at each end of the field where I daily work. And rather than miss an instant in beginning my daily prayer I would, O

* The real father of Enver Pasha is still living, nevertheless he has an adopted spiritual father. The arrangement is curious but not unknown in Turkey.

Master, use sand, which I have placed for that purpose in the middle of the field, for as you know, O Master, the use of sand is permitted in cases of necessity. Please remind the Father, O Prophet, and tell him I have waited long. Ask him not to forget me. Remember that only once did I ever take the life of an animal. That animal was a rat that was doing harm to my field. I repented as soon as I had killed it. I have done penance ever since, and I hope that I have atoned for the crime. But the deed, O Master, was done. Lo, in proof of my repentance, see these bones!" Whereupon, taking off and unfolding his turban, he showed Isa the remaining few bones of the rat, which he had worn wrapped up in his turban all those years as a penance.

"Allah is merciful!" repeated this devout man, "Allah is forgiving. He is the hearer of prayer and the judge of judges. Ask him, O Master, to remember me! See the proofs of my repentance, and ask him to give me my reward when the time comes."

Isa promised that when He prayed to the Father He would certainly mention the case of His distressed brother. So saying, he withdrew. A little further on He met another man who accosted Him in the same manner with: "Master, whither goest Thou?"

And Isa answered him in the same way, "I go unto the mountain to pray."

"O Master," quoth the man, "when You are praying mention to the Father that I am not as other men. I have never broken my fast on the ordained days. I have given regularly to those who have not. No one has knocked at my door without receiving the aid he asked. I have never missed being present at the synagogue to pray, and I have often given alms, as all who know me can testify. When praying to the Father, O Prophet, remind Him of my life's devotion,

and when my time comes let Him not forget to reward such a faithful and devoted servant as I have ever been!"

Isa said that when praying to the Father He would not forget to mention this man's request. And He continued His journey to the mountain.

He had not gone much further when another man, reeling from one side of the street to the other, accosted Him with a "Whither, O Master?" imperfectly articulated. The man was unkempt in person, and his garments were soiled with mud and dust. Isa gave him the same answer, "I go to the mountain to pray unto the Father," and the drunkard seemed sobered. "O Master," said he, "when praying to the Father pray, I beseech you, for me. Tell the Father to be merciful to me. Ask Him if my days of punishment are not nearing an end. Remind him that for years I have been the ruin of all who came in contact with me. My children have gone to an early grave after having suffered on my account from the tenderest age. My home is now the gutter, and my mind is never at rest except when I have satiated that demon of thirst which commands me, tortures me, rules me, but never destroys me. He never, alas! destroys me, but he has destroyed all I loved on earth. Ask, implore the Father to be merciful, and to let me be liberated. I beg that in your prayers to the Father you may mention my sufferings, and the ruin which I have brought on all those who loved me and who were devoted to me. Implore Him, O Master, to grant me release—or death!"

When Isa answered that He would remember him in His prayers to the Father the drunkard reeled away laughing and singing. Had he already forgotten the liberation he had begged Jesus to solicit for him from the Father? Or was it, perchance, the joy he felt in knowing that he would be prayed for by another, and that possibly that other's prayer would be

answered though his own spasmodic but earnest prayers had never been heard?

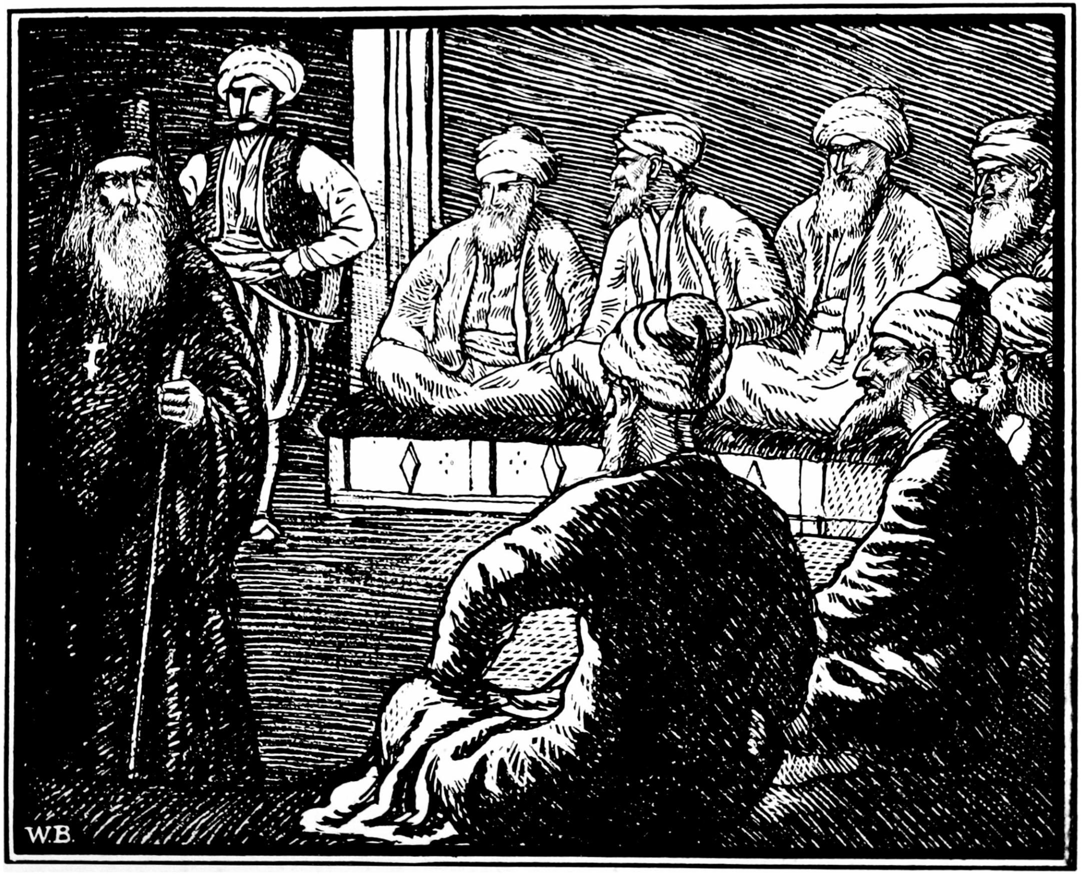
Towards evening Isa descended the mountain, and again met the three brothers who had asked Him to pray for them. To the labourer in the field Jesus said that He had spoken to the Father, who said that there was no reward for hypocrisy. His carrying the water not to be late for the appointed hour of prayer, his telling of his chaplet five times each day, and his wearing of the rat's skeleton in his turban were not pleasing to God. All those things were done for man's approbation, and not for the love of God. The sincere pray at all times, and at all times the Father hears.

Then He turned to the second and said, "When praying to the Father I mentioned you, and your reward is that you got what you gave. You gave few blessings and little in truth or sincerity.

The drunkard turned to Isa and said, "O Master, did you pray for me, and did the Father say that He would liberate me?"

And Isa said to him, "Peace, brother! The demon of thirst has left you, for you were sincere, and your time of repentance has begun. Meanwhile the ear of the Father, the All-Compassionate, the Forgiver, still waits to hear one sincere prayer from these your brethren who pray so much."

Whereupon Isa went his way.



THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCH LEAVING THE COUNCIL

To face page 109

THE THIRTEENTH SON

IN the town of Adrianople there lived an Armenian patriarch, Munadi Hagop by name, respected and loved alike by Mussulman and Christian. He was a man of wide reading and profound judgment. The Ottoman governor of the same place, Usref Pasha, happened also to be a man of considerable acquirements and education. The patriarch and the governor therefore associated much together. Common literary tastes made them the best of friends, as common literary tastes sometimes bring together in close intimacy the Protestant rector and the Catholic parish priest in a remote Connemara parish wherein these two are the only educated persons. They were frequently seen walking out together or visiting one another at their respective houses. This went on for some time, and the twelve wise men who were judges in the city thought that their governor was doing wrong in associating so much with a dog of a Christian; so they resolved to call him to account.

This resolution taken, the entire twelve proceeded to the house of the governor and told him that he was setting a bad example to his subjects. They feared, too, that the salvation of his own soul and of his posterity was in danger, should this Armenian in any way influence his mind.

"My friends," answered the governor, "this man is very learned, and the only reason why we so often come together is because a great sympathy exists between us with regard to literary and philosophical subjects, and that we therefore derive

much mutual pleasure from our friendship. I ask his advice, and he gives me a clear explanation. He asks my advice, and frequently I am able to enlighten him. He is my friend, and I would gladly see him your friend also."

"Oh," said the spokesman of the judges, "it is his wise answers, then, that act like magic on you? Well, we will give him a question to answer, and if he solves it to our satisfaction we shall freely admit that he is a really great man."

"I am sure you will not be disappointed!" said the pasha. "He has never failed me, and I have sometimes put questions to him which appeared unanswerable. He will surely call to-morrow. Shall I send him to you or bring him myself?"

"We wish to see him alone," said the judges.

"I shall not fail to send him to you to-morrow, and I assure you that after you have seen him once you will often seek his company."

On the following day the pasha told the patriarch how matters stood, and begged him to call on the gentlemen who took so lively an interest in their friendly relations.

The patriarch, never dreaming of what would happen, called on the twelve wise men and introduced himself. They were holding the divan, and the entrance of the patriarch gave considerable pleasure to them. On the table lay a turban and a drawn sword.

The customary salutations having been duly exchanged, the patriarch seated himself, and at once told them that his friend the governor had asked him to call, and he took much pleasure in making their acquaintance, adding that he would be happy to do anything in his power that they might wish.

The spokesman of the divan rose and said: "Effendi, our friend the governor has told us of your great learning, and we have decided to put a question to you. The reason of our taking this liberty is because the governor told us that he

had never put a question to you which had remained unanswered."

And as he spoke he moved toward the table.

"Effendi, our question will consist of only a few words." And laying his right hand on the turban and his left hand on the sword, he said: "Is this right? . . . or is this right?"

The patriarch paused, aghast at the terrible nature of the interrogation. He saw destruction staring him in the face. Nevertheless, he said with great composure: "Gentlemen, you have put an exceedingly difficult question to me, the most difficult that could be put to man. However, it is a question put, and now, according to your laws, it cannot be recalled."

"No," answered in one voice the twelve wise men, "it cannot be recalled."

"I will only say that it grieves me much that I must reply to this question," the patriarch continued, "and I cannot do so without fervent long-continued prayers for guidance. Therefore I beg to request a week's time before giving my answer."

To this no objection was made, and the patriarch prepared to go. Respectfully bowing to all present, as if nothing out of the common had happened, he slowly moved toward the door apparently in deep thought.

Just as he reached the door he turned back, and addressing the judges said:

"Gentlemen, one of the reasons why I had great pleasure in meeting you to-day was this: I wished to have your advice on a difficult legal problem which has been presented to me by some members of my community. Knowing your great wisdom, I thought you might assist me, and, as you are now sitting in lawful council I shall, if it be agreeable to you, put the case before you and be very grateful to have your opinion."

The judges, whose curiosity was aroused, and who were flattered that a man of such a high reputation for wisdom should ask for their advice, begged him to proceed.

"Gentlemen and wise men," began the patriarch, "there was once a father, and this father had thirteen sons, who were esteemed by all who knew them. As time with sure hand marked its progress on the issue of this good man, and the children grew into youth, they one by one went into the world, spreading to the four known quarters of the globe, and carrying with them the good influence given by their father. Through them the name of the father spread, causing a great moral and mental revolution throughout the world. The father in his native home, however, saw that he was old and well stricken in age, and he knew not the day of his death. And, behold, he yearned to see his sons once more that he might bless them before he died. He accordingly sent messengers all over the world, saying: 'Come, my sons, and receive your father's blessing before the Lord before my death. Come and take each one of ye your portion of the worldly possessions I have, together with my blessing. And when my soul hath blessed you go ye forth again, doing each one his duty to God and man.'

"One by one the sons of the aged father came, and once more were they united in the ancient home of their childhood. They all returned thus with the exception of one son. The remaining days of the old man were spent with his twelve sons, and the brothers found that all of them had retained the teachings of their infancy, and their mutual pleasure was great. This period of reunion, though it was of comparatively short duration, was happier by far than the years of childhood and youth which the father and the sons had spent together. Still it was marked by a cloud: the thirteenth son had not been found. The messengers returned one after the other, bearing

no tidings of him. The old father saw that he could wait no longer, that he must dispose of his worldly possessions, give his blessing to his twelve sons, and rejoin his Father. So he called them to his side, and spake unto them thus, saying:

"'My sons, as you have done unto me, so likewise may it be done unto you. You have cheered my last steps to the grave, and I bless you.'

"And the father's blessing was bestowed on each.

"'Of all I possess,' said the father, 'I give unto each of you an equal share with my blessing. You are my offspring; and may God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful, that ye may be a multitude of people. You are my twelve sons, and I have no others. Your brother who was is no longer. We have waited long, that he should take his portion and my blessing; but he hath tarried elsewhere, and now the hand of my Father is on me, and as you have come unto me, so must I go unto Him.'

"So the father ordained that the twelve should be his sole heirs, and declared that anyone coming afterwards and claiming to be his lost son was an impostor. Then the aged patriarch gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

"The twelve sons again went forth into the world, and carried with them the blessings and teachings of their father, and those teachings developed and grew, and the memory of their father was cherished and blessed among them.

"And it came to pass that, many years after, a person came claiming to be the missing son, and sought to obtain the part of the inheritance due to him. Not only did he wish his own share, but he claimed the whole worldly possessions of his father. He said that he was the only son who had been blessed by his father, and he exhorted all to follow his teachings. By those who knew, he was not believed; but many were ignorant of the father, and were inclined to believe in the impostor.

"Now, gentlemen, this is the case that has troubled me much. As you are sitting in lawful council, it would give me much pleasure if you would cast some light on it. Your statement will help me, and I will be ever grateful to you. Had this son, the late returned person, any right to all the worldly possessions of the father? Had he any right even to an equal share in the inheritance?"

Having thus spoken, he turned to the hodjas with an inquiring look. They one and all, unanimously and in a breath, said that the will of the father was law, that it should be respected, and that the thirteenth son was therefore in the wrong. On returning he should have gone to his brothers, and no doubt he would have been received as a brother; but he acted otherwise. He should receive nothing.

"I am glad to see that you look at it in that light, and I will now say that such has always been my own opinion. Your decision, however, now adds strength to my own conviction, and, had there been any doubt on my part, your unanimous declaration would have dispelled it. I would further esteem it a great kindness and favour if you would affix your signatures to a written statement declaring that the thirteenth son had no right to any of the possessions he claimed."

Flattered to find their opinion so highly valued, the judges at once consented to do this; and the patriarch set about drawing up the case. Then he read the statement to them, and each put his hand and seal to the document.

The patriarch thanked them and departed.

A week had passed, and the judges had entirely forgotten the case that had been put to them, but they had not forgotten the patriarch, and eagerly awaited his answer to their question. In their own opinion that fatal question left no loophole of escape except apostasy, and it would almost certainly lead to

the patriarch's head being separated from his body by a blow of the executioner's axe. But the patriarch did not make his appearance, and as the prescribed time had passed, the judges went to the governor to see what steps should be taken.

The governor was deeply grieved when the judges told him of the terrible question they had put to the patriarch. But he had seen the patriarch only that morning, and as the holy man did not then seem to be at all anxious, he felt convinced that a satisfactory answer would be forthcoming. He questioned the hodjas as to what had taken place, and they answered that nothing had been said beyond the question that had been put to him, and his request for a week's time in which to answer.

"Did he say nothing at all," asked the pasha, "before he left?"

"Nothing," said the spokesman of the judges, "except that he put to us a case which he had been called on to decide, and asked our opinion about it."

"What was the case?" asked the pasha. And the judges recited it to him, told what opinion they had given, and stated that they had, at the patriarch's request, placed their seals to the document embodying this opinion.

"Go home, you heads of asses," said the governor, "and thank Allah that it is to a noble and great man who would make no unworthy use of it that you have delivered a document testifying that Mohammed is an impostor. In future, venture not to enter into judgment with men to whom it has pleased God to give more wit than to yourselves."

[Note by Authors. This tale is from an Armenian source, as its nature indicates].

HOW THE PRIEST KNEW IT WOULD SNOW

A TURK travelling in Asia Minor once came to a Christian village. He journeyed on horseback, accompanied by a black slave; and, as he seemed to be a man of consequence, the priest of the village offered him hospitality for the night. The first thing to be done was to conduct the traveller to the stable, that he might see his horse attended to and comfortably stalled for the night. In the stable was a magnificent Arab horse, belonging to the priest, and the Turk, a good judge of horse-flesh, could not help gazing at it for some moments with covetous eyes. But, nevertheless, in order that no ill should befall the beautiful creature, and to counteract the influence of the evil eye, he spat at the animal. After they had dined, the priest took his guest out for a walk in the garden, and in the course of a very pleasant conversation he informed the Turk that on the morrow there would be snow on the ground.

"Never! Impossible!" said the Turk.

"Well, to-morrow you will see that I am right," said the priest.

"I am willing to stake my horse against yours that you are wrong," answered the Turk, who was delighted at this opportunity of securing the horse, without committing a breach of Oriental etiquette by asking his host if he would sell

it. After some persuasion the priest accepted this wager, and they separated for the night.

Later on that night, the Turk said to his slave: "Go, Sali, go and see what the weather says, for truly my life is in want of our good host's horse."

Sali went out to make an observation, and, on returning, said to his master: "Master, the heavens are like unto your face—without a frown and with kindly sparkling eyes—while the earth is like unto the face of your black slave."

"'Tis well, Sali, 'tis well! What a beautiful animal that is!"

Later on, before retiring to rest, he sent his slave on another inspection, and was gratified to receive the same answer. Early in the morning he awoke, and calling his slave, who had slept on the mat at his door, he sent him forth again to see if any change had taken place.

"Oh, master!" reported Sali, in trembling tones, "Nature has reversed herself, for the heavens are now like the dark face of your slave, and the earth is like your face, white, entirely white."

"*Chok shai!* This is wonderful!" exclaimed the Turk, "Then I have lost not only that beautiful animal but my own horse as well. Oh pity! Oh pity!"

He gave up his horse, but, before parting, he begged the priest to tell him how he knew it would snow.

"My pig told me as we were walking in the garden yesterday. I saw it put its nose in the heap of manure you see in that corner, and I knew that to be a sure sign that it would snow on the morrow," replied the priest.

Deeply mystified, the Turk and his slave proceeded on foot. Reaching a Turkish village before nightfall, he sought and obtained shelter for the night from the imam, the Mohammedan priest of the village. While partaking of the

evening meal he asked the imam when the feast of the Baïram would be.

"Truly, I do not know! When the cannon is fired, I will know it is Baïram," said his host.

"What!" said the traveller, becoming angry, "you an imam—a learned hodja—and don't know when it will be Baïram, and that pig of the Greek priest knew when it would snow? Shame! Shame!"

And, becoming very angry, he declined the hospitality of the imam and went elsewhere.

Reference is made in this tale to the Oriental custom of spitting at an object which excites our intense admiration in order to avert the evil eye.

It is the custom of the Turks, men and women, if passing a beautiful child, to make a motion with the lips, as if spitting at it. This is supposed to counteract the "evil eye" or the evil effects which their glance of admiration might bring on the child, even if bestowed unconsciously.

The "evil eye" or the baneful spell of the evil eye is caused by looks of admiration, envy, jealousy, hatred, or contempt. Hence even a father's or mother's loving gaze might put the "evil eye" on the child. There are numerous amulets to counteract this, and these amulets the child wears on its head. The amulet may be a blue bead, a coin, the antlers of a stag beetle, or a whole sentence of the Koran sewn up in a tiny leather bag, or encased in a silver box. Whatever form it may take, the amulet is worn in a most conspicuous position on the child's little fez so that the human eye may be attracted by it and thus diverted from the wearer. The pious Moslem is amazed to find foreigners objecting to these charms, considering that they themselves set up lightning rods on the summits of their houses and churches in order to divert

from those buildings and their inhabitants the angry, red eye of the thunderstorm. Any animal, or any article even, which is prized by a Mohammedan is adorned with a protective amulet or charm. Garlic is used in the same way by the Greeks and is placed in company with an old shoe, on a roughly made cross above a building that is being put up. This will protect the masons from accident during the construction of the building, and also against the effect of the "evil eye."

This superstition of the "evil eye" is extraordinarily strong and widespread in the East, and I have known well-educated English residents to be as subject to it as any illiterate Turk or Greek. I have never, indeed, met anybody born in the East who was free from it; and some of them, persons worthy of all credit, have given me instances of the effect of the "evil eye" which can only be explained away on the theory of some obscure psychic influence of which science is still ignorant.

A book could be written on this very ancient superstition, but I shall only cite here a rather funny story told in a work that is not generally funny—Slatin Pasha's "Fire and Sword in the Soudan." It seems that the khalîfa was so afraid of somebody putting the evil eye on him that he insisted on people brought before him fixing their eyes on the ground and not on him. "Some years ago," says Slatin Pasha, "a Syrian named Mohammed Saïd, who had the misfortune to have only one eye, happened to be near him when he was delivering a religious lecture, and unintentionally cast his blind eye in the direction of the khalîfa. The latter at once called me up, and told me to tell the Syrian never to come near him again, and if he did, never to dare to look at him. At the same time he told me that every one should be most careful to guard themselves against the evil eye, 'For,' said he, 'nothing can resist the human eye. Illness and misfortunes are generally caused by the evil eye'."

STORIES ABOUT JANISSARIES AND JEWS

STORIES ABOUT JANISSARIES AND JEWS

FOOD, DRINK AND AMUSEMENT —ALL FOR A HA'PENNY

THOUGH Samaria, in Palestine, is wedged in between Galilee and Judea, there is not a single Jew in Cæsarea (or Kaisariyeh), its beautiful sea-port.

Cæsarea is a prosperous town inhabited principally by wealthy Armenians and Pastromadjis (vendors of dried meat). Perhaps the Cæsarean, whether he be Turk, Greek or Armenian, is the most travelled citizen of any city in Asia Minor that I have ever visited, and wherever he is found he is always proud of having come from Cæsarea. I must add, however, that like the Scotsman, he seldom goes back to his native town. Many of the wealthiest Greeks and Armenians in Turkey come from Cæsarea; and they are proud of the fact. Cæsarea is also proud of the fact; but, once they leave her, Cæsarea never sees any more of them.

Undoubtedly the Cæsarean, whether he be Turk, Armenian, or Greek, is easily able to hold his own with the local merchants of any of the larger towns of Turkey. There are, I repeat, no Jews in Cæsarea. Probably that ancient city is too wide-awake even for the Jews. That, at all events, is the reason popularly given by the self-complacent citizens themselves.

These citizens also tell an amusing tale to explain this singular absence of the ubiquitous Israelite. Once upon a

time long long ago, in the days of the Twelfth Imam,* venerated by all true Shiites, a Jew on his way from Angora and riding upon an ass, halted at the outskirts of Cæsarea, and turned over and over in his mind the question of whether he should or should not settle in that rich though wretched-looking town.

Finally he determined to stay where he was until one of the inhabitants came his way. A short talk with that inhabitant would enable him to gauge the general intelligence and business capacity of the community, and consequently to decide whether he would pitch his tent in Cæsarea or push on further.

Chance soon brought towards him one of the young sons of Cæsarea, a lad not yet in his teens. The Jew approached this boy and, in piteous tones, told him that he had come a long journey, that both he and his ass were much fatigued—in truth they could not proceed any farther. He had nothing in the world but a ha'penny, which was not much, and yet both he and his ass were in dire need of food, drink, and some light amusement wherewith to while away the time pleasantly but inexpensively until the hour of their departure.

The Cæsarean lad brightened up when he heard the Jew's hard luck story. "A ha'penny," quoth he, "is a great deal or money, and, if you trust me with it, I shall procure for you all you require." With tears in his eyes—tears of gratitude apparently—the Jew gave the ha'penny to the boy, who immediately rushed off with a fleetness that suggested to the Jew the painful thought that he would never come back. The Cæsareans are honest, however, though very thrifty, and the boy returned

* This was the gentleman commonly called Imam-al-Mahdi, who disappeared down a well. Pious Shiites believe that, notwithstanding his prolonged immersion, the reverend gentleman is still alive and well, and will reappear just before the Day of Judgment.

carrying on his back an enormous water melon which he gave to the Jew saying: "Behold I have brought food, drink and diversion for both you and your ass, and I assure you that I have only retained a just commission and meagre wage for carrying the melon all this way."

"This fruit will furnish you with both food and drink, and the rind will feed and quench the thirst of your ass. The numerous seeds of the melon will not only sustain you if you are still hungry, but will give you a pleasant pastime till the sun sets, cracking them for the kernel and throwing away the husks which your ass may perhaps care to eat up."

The Jew looked at the youth long and attentively, asked him his age, and then wondered mentally what the adult intelligence of Cæsarea must be if this were an average specimen of its budding intellect. Finally he took the melon in silence, mournfully mounted his ass, and moved on.

HOW MEHMET ALI PASHA ADMINISTERED JUSTICE

A JEWISH merchant was in the habit of borrowing, and sometimes of lending, money to an Armenian merchant of Cairo. Receipts were never exchanged, but at the closing of an old account or the opening of a new one they would simply say to each other, I have debited or credited you in my books, as the case might be, with so much.

On one occasion the Armenian lent the Jew the sum of twenty-five thousand piastres, and after the usual verbal acknowledgment the Armenian made his entry. A reasonable time having elapsed, the Armenian sent his greetings to the Jew. This, in Eastern etiquette, meant, " Kindly pay me what you owe." The Jew, however, did not take the hint, but returned complimentary greetings to the Armenian. This was repeated several times. Finally, the Armenian sent a message requesting the Jew to call upon him. The Jew, however, told the messenger to inform the Armenian merchant, that if he wished to see him he must come to his house. The Armenian called upon the Jew, and requested payment of the loan. The Jew brought out his books and showed the Armenian that he was both credited and debited with the sum of twenty-five thousand piastres. The Armenian protested, but in vain ; the Jew maintained that the debt had been paid.

In the hope of recovering his money, the Armenian had

the case brought before Mehmet Ali Pasha of Egypt, a clever and learned judge. No witnesses, however, could be cited to prove that the money had either been borrowed or repaid. The entries were verified, and it was thought that perhaps the Armenian had forgotten. Before dismissing the case, however, Mehmet Ali Pasha called in the public weigher, and ordered that both the Armenian and Jewish merchants should be weighed. This done, Mehmet Ali Pasha took note of their respective weights. The Jew weighed fifty okes and the Armenian sixty okes. He then discharged them, saying that he would send for them later on.

The Armenian waited patiently for a month or two, but no summons came from the pasha. Every Friday he endeavoured to meet the pasha so as to bring the case to his mind, but without avail; for the pasha, perceiving him from a distance, would turn away his head or otherwise purposely avoid catching his eye. At last, after about eight months of anxious waiting, the Armenian and the Jew were summoned to appear before the court. Mehmet Ali Pasha, in opening the case, called in the public weigher and had them weighed again. On this occasion it was found that the Armenian had decreased in weight, and that he now weighed only fifty okes, for worry makes a man grow thin. The Jew, on the contrary, had put on several okes. These facts were gravely considered, and the pasha accused the Jew of having received the money, and at once ordered a brass pot to be heated and placed on his head to force a confession from him. The Jew did not care to submit to this fearful ordeal, so he confessed that he had not repaid the debt, and he had to repay it there and then.

THE JEW AND THE JANISSARY

BALATA, situated on the Golden Horn, is mostly inhabited by Jews of the poorer classes, who make their livelihood as tinsmiths, tinkers, and hawkers.

Here, in the early days when the Janissaries flourished, there lived a certain tinsmith called Kalaidji Avram. As he had rather an extensive business, his neighbours, especially those who lived nearest to him, were always complaining of the annoying smoke which issued from his little factory, and of the disagreeable odour proceeding from the ammonia which he used in tinning his pots and pans.

Opposite Avram's place the village guard-house was situated, and the chief, a Janissary, often had disputes with Avram about the smoke. Avram would invariably reply: "I have my children to feed, and I must work; and without smoke I cannot earn their daily bread."

The Janissary, much annoyed, cultivated a dislike for Avram and a thirst for revenge.

It happened that a Jew one day came to the Janissary and said to him: "Do you want to make a fortune? If so, you have the means of making it at once, provided you agree to halve with me whatever is made."

The Janissary asked for further particulars, and was assured that he had but to say a word or two to a person whom the Jew would designate. If he did so the money would be at once forthcoming. Hearing this, the Janissary accepted the conditions. The Jew then said: "All you have to do is



"AVRAM HAS TAKEN YOUR PLACE"

To face page 129

to go up to a Jewish funeral procession that will pass by here to-morrow on its way to the necropolis outside the city, and order it to stop. It is against the religion of the Jews for such a thing to happen, and the chacham (rabbi) will offer you first ten, then twenty, and finally one hundred and ten thousand piastres to allow the funeral to proceed. The half will be for you, to compensate you for your trouble, and the other fifty-five thousand piastres for me."

To the Janissary this certainly did seem a very simple way of making money. The next day, true enough, he beheld a funeral, and immediately went out and ordered it to stop. The chacham protested, offering first small bribes, then larger and larger, till ultimately he promised to bring to the worthy captain one hundred and ten thousand piastres for allowing the funeral to proceed.

That evening, as agreed, the chacham came and handed the money to the captain of the Janissaries. Then, taking another bag containing a second one hundred and ten thousand piastres, he said: "If you will tell me who informed you that we would pay so much money rather than have a funeral stopped, you can have this further sum."

The Janissary immediately bethought him of Avram, the tinsmith, and accused him of being the informer. The chacham, satisfied, paid the sum and departed.

Then Avram suddenly disappeared, nobody knew whither. The chacham said that death had taken him for his own, as a punishment for stopping him while on a journey.

The accomplice of the Janissary came a few days later for his share of the money. The Janissary handed him the fifty-five thousand piastres, and at the same time said: "Of these fifty-five thousand piastres, thirty thousand must be given to the widow and children of Avram, and I advise you to give it willingly, for Avram has taken your place."

THE METAMORPHOSIS

HUSSEIN Agha was much troubled in spirit and mind. He had saved a large sum of money in order that he might make the pilgrimage to Mecca. What troubled him was that after having carefully provided for all the expenses of this long journey there still remained a few hundred piastres over and above. What was he to do with these? True, they could be distributed amongst the poor, but then, might not he, on his return, require the money for an even more meritorious purpose?

After much consideration, he decided that it was not Allah's wish that he should at once give this money in charity. On the other hand, he felt convinced that he should not give it to a brother for safe keeping, as he himself might be inspired, during his pilgrimage, to spend it for some charitable purpose. After a time he thought of a kindly Jew who was his neighbour, and he wondered whether it would not be as well for him to leave his savings in the hands of this man, to whom Allah had been good, seeing that his possessions were great. But, after mature thought, he decided not to put temptation in the way of his neighbour. He therefore secured a jar, at the bottom of which he placed a small bag containing his surplus of wealth, and filled it with olives. This he carried to his neighbour, the kindly Jew, and begged him to take care of it for him. Ben Moïse of course consented, and Hussein Agha departed on his pilgrimage, quite easy in his mind.

First of all he came to Stamboul in order to join the great European caravan which assembles at Constantinople in the month of Regib every year. With this caravan he crossed the Bosphorus and they all joined the still greater caravan which collects from all quarters of the world in the vast plains of Scutari.

For we, O true believers, are the only pilgrims left in the world.* Each of us is obliged, if he can afford it, to make

* This is very true. As "Odysseus" says in his "Turkey in Europe"—

"Perhaps one fact which lies at the root of all the actions of the Turks, small and great, is that they are by nature nomads. It is their custom to ornament the walls of their houses with texts instead of pictures, and, if they quoted from the Bible instead of the Korân, no words would better characterize their manner of life than 'Here have we no continuing city.' Both in the town and in the country they change their dwellings with extreme facility and think it rather strange to remain long in the same abode. The very aspect of a Turkish house seems to indicate that it is not intended as a permanent residence. The ground floor is generally occupied by stables and stores. From this a staircase, often merely a ladder, leads to an upper storey, usually consisting of a long passage, from which open several rooms, the entrances to which are closed by curtains, not by doors. There are probably holes in the planking of the passages, and spider's webs and swallows' nests in the rafters. The rooms themselves, however, are generally scrupulously clean, but bare and unfurnished. The walls are plainly whitewashed, and ornamented only by one or two *yaftés* (illuminated texts). Chairs and tables there are probably none, and the cupboards let into the wall are usually of rough unplaned deal. The general impression left on a European is that a party of travellers have occupied an old barn and said, 'Let us make the place clean enough to live in; it's no use taking any more trouble about it. We shall probably be off again in a week.' All houses are constructed entirely with a view to the summer, and the advent of winter despite the fact that it lasts about six months and is often severe, seems a constant source of surprise. The inhabitants huddle into one room heated by an iron stove or open brazier, and leave empty the rest of the house which cannot be warmed. The same rough-and-ready arrangement is seen in the disposition of the rooms. They are not assigned to any special purpose. You sit in a room and write on

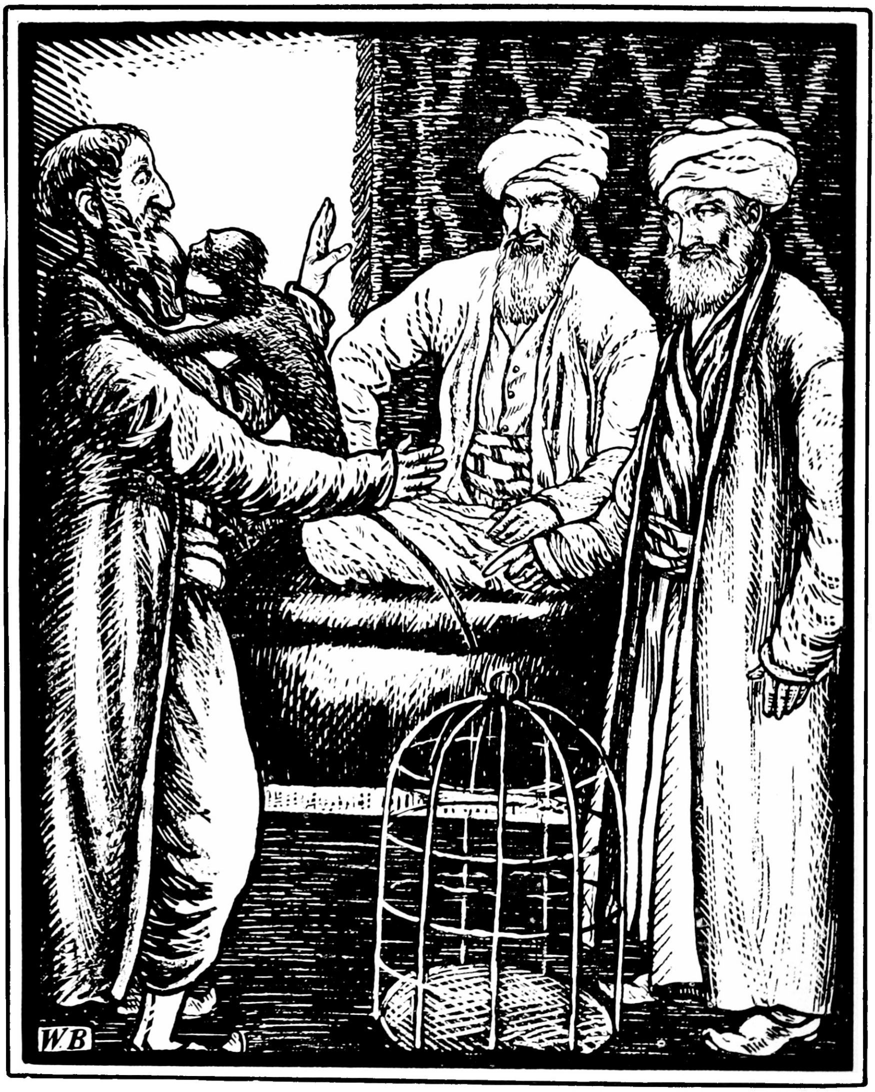
the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in his life-time. No such obligation has been laid on the Jews or on the Christians. Hence our superior culture and refinement.

But, to return to my story,* the caravan at last set out, among those in that great procession being jugglers and buffoons exhibiting as usual their light and indecent mummery. In other parts of the long array mollahs and dervishes exhorted the people to piety, lacerating at the same time their own flesh in order to prove their earnestness. But the most conspicuous object in the caravan was, of course, the sacred camel. This holy beast carries, as you all know, the *mahhfil* or seat from which the Prophet preached and dispensed justice in his journeys. There are many devout Mohammedans, indeed, who assert that this camel is itself the actual animal on which the Prophet rode, and that it is kept alive by a miracle in order that it may perform this annual journey to the Holy City. Praise be to God! Allah Akbar!

On his return from the Holy City, Hussein, now a hadji, repaired to Ben Moïse and asked for his jar of olives. At the same time he presented Ben Moïse with a rosary of Yemen

your hand; when you are hungry, you call, a little table is brought in and you eat; when you want to go to bed, a pile of rugs is laid in a corner and you go to sleep on it. The same thing may be witnessed in a more striking form at the Imperial Palace of Yildiz. I have seen a number of secretaries and officials working in a room decked with red plush and the ordinary furniture of European palaces. Some were sitting curled up in arm-chairs with their ink-pots poised perilously on the arms, the idea of having a writing-table never having come into their heads. Some were squatting on the floor, eating with their fingers off broad dishes placed on a low table. One was taking a siesta in the corner. Nothing could have more vividly suggested the idea of a party of tent-dwellers who had suddenly occupied a European house and did not quite know how to use it."

* A Turkish story-teller is supposed to be telling this story to a group of co-religionists in a Stamboul café.



THE MONKEY EMBRACING MOISE

To face page 133

stones, in recognition of the Jew's kindness in keeping the olives, which were, he said, exceptionally palatable olives. Ben Moïse thanked him, and Hadji Hussein departed with his iar, well satisfied.

Now it came to pass that, during the absence of Hussein Agha, Ben Moïse had one day some distinguished visitors, to whom, as is the Eastern custom, he served raki. Unfortunately, however, he had no mézé (appetizer) to offer, and in the East it is the custom to offer the raki and the mézé together. Ben Moïse bethought him of the olives, and immediately went to the cellar, opened the jar, and extracted some of the olives, saying : " Olives are not rare ; Hussein will never know the difference if I replace them."

The olives were found to be excellent, and Ben Moïse again and again helped his friends to them. Finally the jar was nearly emptied, and great was the Jew's surprise when he found that instead of olives, he brought forth on one occasion a bag containing a quantity of gold. Ben Moïse could not understand this phenomenon, but he appropriated the gold and held his peace.

Arriving home, poor Hussein Agha was distracted to find that his jar contained nothing but olives. Vainly did he protest to Ben Moïse.

"My friend," the Jew replied, "you gave me the jar, saying it contained olives. I believed you and kept the jar safe for you. Now you say that in the jar you had put some money together with the olives. Perhaps you did, but is not that the jar you gave me ? If, as you say, there was gold in the jar and it is now gone, all I can say is that the stronger has overcome the weaker, and that in this case the gold has either been converted into olives or into oil. What can I do ? The iar you gave me I returned to you."

Hadji Hussein admitted the apparent truth of this, and

fully appreciated the fact that he had no case against the Jew. So, saying "Chok shai!" he returned to his home.

That night Hussein mingled in his prayers a vow to recover his gold at no matter what cost or trouble.

In his younger days Hadji Hussein had been a pipe-maker, and many were the chibooks of exceptional beauty that he had made. Go but to the potter's lane at Tophané, in Constantinople, and you will find that the works of art in the way of chibooks which are displayed by the majority of the shopkeepers there were originally fashioned by the cunning hand of Hussein. The art that had fed him for years was now to be the means of recovering for him his money.

Hadji Hussein daily met Ben Moïse, but he never again referred to the money, and, further, Hussein's sons were always in company with Ben Moïse's only son, a lad of ten.

Time passed, and Ben Moïse entirely forgot about the jar, the olives, and the gold. Not so, however, Hadji Hussein. He had been working. First he had made an effigy of Ben Moïse. When he had completed this image to his satisfaction, he dressed it in a costume precisely similar to the one which the Jew habitually wore. He then purchased a monkey. This monkey was kept in a cage opposite the effigy of Ben Moïse. Twice a day regularly the monkey's food was placed on the shoulders of the Jew, and Hussein would open the cage, saying: "Baba-à git" (go to your father). At a bound the monkey would plant itself on the shoulders of the Jew, and would not be dislodged until its hunger had been satisfied.

In the meantime Hadji Hussein and Ben Moïse were greater friends than ever, and their children were likewise playmates. One day Hussein took Ben Moïse's son to his harem, and told him, much to the lad's joy, that he was to be their guest for a week. Later on Ben Moïse called on Hadji Hussein to know the reason of his son's not returning as usual at sundown.

"Ah, my friend," said Hussein, "a great calamity has befallen you! Your son, alas! has been converted into a monkey, a furious monkey! So furious that I was compelled to put him into a cage. Come and see for yourself."

No sooner did Ben Moïse enter the room in which the caged monkey was, than it set up a howl, not having had any food that day. Poor Ben Moïse was thunderstruck, and Hadji Hussein begged him to take the monkey away.

Next day Hussein was summoned to the court, the case of Ben Moïse was heard, and the hadji was ordered to return the child at once. This he vowed he could not do; and to convince the judges he offered to bring the monkey, caged as it was, to the court, and, *In-shâ-Allah!* they would see for themselves that the child of the Jew had been converted into a monkey. This proposal was ultimately accepted by the court, and the monkey was brought in. Hadji Hussein took special care to place the cage opposite Ben Moïse, and no sooner did the monkey catch sight of him than it set up a scream, and the judges said: "Chok shai!" Hussein Agha then opened the cage door, saying: "Go to your father!" Whereupon, with a bound and a yell the monkey embraced Ben Moïse, putting his head, in search of food, first on one shoulder of the Jew and then on the other. The judges were thunderstricken, and declared themselves incompetent to pass judgment in such an extraordinary case. Ben Moïse protested, saying that it was against the laws of nature for such a metamorphosis to take place, whereupon Hadji Hussein told the judges of an analogous case in which some gold pieces had turned into olives, and he called Ben Moïse as a witness to the veracity of his statement. To the astonishment of the judges, the Jew could not deny this assertion; and their Honours were much impressed when Hadji Hussein proceeded to remind them that similar instances of men being transformed into

apes abounded in the Korân and in the holy traditions. And if the change could be effected wholesale in the case of men, did it not stand to reason that it could be more easily accomplished in the case of boys—especially, added Hadji, in the case of a boy like Ben Moïse's, who, were it not for his nose and for his hairlessness, might well have been mistaken for an ape anywhere.

Upon this there was some unseemly laughter in court, but the kadis sternly checked it and called upon the defendant to produce his testimony *re* the previous transformation of human beings into apes. Having been to Mecca, however, Hadji had, though unable to read, acquired an extensive knowledge of the Korân, and he immediately cited the melancholy case of that ungodly tribe known as "The Latter Ad," the children of Lokmân of the tribe of Ad, the son of Aus, the son of Aram, the son of Sem, the son of Noah, who, after the confusion of tongues, settled in Al Ahkâf, or the Winding Sands, where his posterity greatly multiplied.

At this point Ben Moïse interrupted to remark plaintively that he really did not see what bearing all this had on the hard case of his, Ben Moïse's, son.

"Be patient," quoth Hadji Hussein, "I am coming to that point directly. For, behold, all this tribe, 'The Latter Ad,' were changed into monkeys. And doth not the Almighty himself say, in that Sura entitled 'The Table': 'He whom Allah hath cursed, and with whom he hath been angry, having changed some of them into apes and swine, and who worship Taghût, they are in the worse condition'? Those unhappy ones, O kadis! were the Jews of Allah who broke the Sabbath, for which crime their young men were converted into apes and their old men into swine. And behold, O kadis! how closely that miracle corresponds to the one which has now taken place, for is not the son of Ben Moïse a

Jew and is he not young? What further proof is needed, O ye of understanding?

"Likewise, O kadis! in that Sura which is entitled 'The Cow,' and which was revealed partly at Mecca and partly at Medina, Allah himself saith to the Jews: 'Ye know what befell those of your nation who transgressed on the Sabbath day. We said unto them, Be ye changed into apes, driven away from the society of men. And we made an example unto those who were contemporary with them, and unto those who came after them, and a warning to the pious.'

"And is it not said that one Jew, going in these days to see a friend who was among the unhappy ones, found that friend in the shape of an ape, moving his eyes about wildly; and, asking him whether he was not such a one, the ape made a sign with its head that it was he. Whereupon the friend said to him, 'Did I not advise you to desist from fishing on the Sabbath?' at which the ape wept."

Now, behold, the kadis stood by this time in exceeding great awe of Hadji Hussein. For they themselves had never even heard of those historical instances and theological arguments which Hadji was pouring forth on the court in an uninterrupted stream, whereof I give here only a few drops for the edification of the true believers. And fearing to be found out and exposed, they hastily dismissed the case, telling Hadji that he left the court without a stain on his character, and that the sooner he went away the better they would be pleased. Outside the court Hadji found Ben Moïse leaning against the wall in a cold sweat, for the defendant's eloquence had half-persuaded him that his beloved son really had been turned into an ape. Taking pity, however, on his enemy, Hadji Hussein informed him that there would still be pleasure

and happiness in this world for him, provided he could reconvert the olives into gold. Needless to add that Ben Moïse managed to accomplish that chemical transformation, and that the heir of Ben Moïse returned home immediately after in his natural shape and none the worse for his temporary transformation.

JEW TURNED TURK

SIRKEDJI, the landing-place on the Stamboul side of the Golden Horn, is always a scene of bustle and noise. The caïquejis,* striving for custom, cry at the top of their voices: "I am bound for Haskeuy ; I can take another man ; my fare is a piastre!"

Others call out in lusty tones that they are bound for Karakeuy. Farther out in the stream are other caïques, bound for more distant places, some with a passenger or two, others without any passenger at all. In one of the boats sat a Jew, the only passenger, patiently waiting, while the caïqueji, standing erect, backed in and out, calling every now and then at the top of his voice: "Iskùdar," meaning that he was bound for Scutari, on the Asiatic shore.

At last a Mussulman signed to him to approach, and inquired his fare. After some bargaining the Turk entered the caïque, and the boatman still held on to the pier in the hope of securing a third passenger, which, after a very short time, he did. The third passenger happened to be a Jew, who had forsaken his faith for that of Islam.

This converted individual saw at a glance that one of his fellow-passengers was a Moslem and the other a Jew, and wishing to gain favour in the eyes of the former, he called the other a "Yahoudi" (meaning Jew, but usually employed as a term of disdain), and told him to make room for him. This

* Boatmen ; A caïque is a light boat. The affix *ji* indicates an agent, hence caïqueji from caïque, caféji from café, &c.

the Jew meekly did without a murmur, and the caïqueji bent his oars for the Asiatic shore. The converted Jew and the Turk started a conversation, which they kept up till within a short distance of Scutari, when the Turk turned and said to the Jew, who had been humbly sitting on the low seat with bowed head and closed eyes:

"And what have you to say on the subject, Moses?"

"Alas! Pasha Effendi," answered the Jew, "I have been asleep, and have not followed your conversation; and if I had, of what value, my masters, would be the opinion of me, a poor Jew?"

The converted Jew then said: "At least you can tell us, to pass the time, where you have been in your sleep?" and he burst out laughing, thinking it a capital joke.

"I dreamt I was in Paradise," replied the poor Jew. "Oh! it was wonderful! There were three great golden gates, and on the inside of each gate, at the side of the guard, stood three mighty Prophets of the Most High. Mohammed stood at one, Moses at the second, and Jesus at the third. No one was allowed to pass into Paradise, unless Mohammed, Moses, or Jesus gave the order that they should enter. Suddenly I saw a man knocking at Mohammed's gate. The gate was opened, and the guard asked:

"'What is your name?'

"The man said his name was 'Ahmet.'

"'And your father's name?' again asked the keeper.

"'Abdullah,' replied the applicant.

"Thereupon the Prophet signed with his hand that he might enter.

"I then went to the gate where Jesus stood, and heard the same questions put to an applicant. He told the keeper that his name was Aristide, and that his father's name was Vassili; and Jesus permitted him to enter.



Daily Mirror

"ON THE GOLDEN HORN"

To face page 140

"Hearing a loud knocking at Mohammed's gate again, I hurried to see who the important comer was. There stood a man of confident mien, who proudly answered that his name was Hussein Effendi.

"'And your father's name?' asked the keeper. 'Abraham,' replied Hussein.

"At this Mohammed said: 'Shut the door; you can't enter here; mixtures will never do.'"

"Eh? What happened next?" asked the Turk.

"Just then, as the gate was shutting, I heard your voice, and I awoke, Pasha Effendi," answered the Jew; "and so I can't tell you."

Having by this time reached the *scala* (landing), they disembarked and separated without a word.

PARADISE SOLD BY THE YARD

THE chief imam of the vilayet of Broussa owed to a Jewish money-lender the sum of two hundred piastres. The Jew wanted his money and would give no rest to the imam. Daily he came to ask for it, but without success. The Jew was becoming very anxious, and finally he determined to make a great effort. Not being able to take the imam to court, he decided to try and shame him into paying the sum due; and, to effect this, he came, sat on his debtor's doorstep and bewailed his sad fate in having fallen into the hands of a tyrant. The imam saw that, if this continued, his reputation as a man of justice would be considerably impaired, so he thought of a plan by which to pay off his creditor. Calling the Jew into his house, he said:

"Friend, what wilt thou do with the money if I pay thee?"

"Get food, clothe my children, and advance in my business," answered the Jew.

"My friend," said the imam, "thy pitiful position awakens my compassion. Thou art gathering wealth in this world at the cost of thy eternal soul and thy everlasting peace in the world to come; and I wish I could help thee. I will tell thee what I will do for thee. I would not do the same thing for any other Jew in the world, but thou hast awakened my commiseration. For the debt I owe thee, I will sell thee two hundred yards of Paradise, and, being owner of this

incomparable possession in the world to come, thou canst fearlessly go forth and earn as much as possible in this world, having already made ample provision for the next."

What could the Jew do but take what the imam was willing to give him? So he accepted the deed for the two hundred yards of Paradise. A happy thought now struck the Jew. He set off and found the tithe-collector of the revenues of the mosque, and made friends with him. He then explained to him, when the intimacy had developed, that he was the possessor of a deed entitling him to two hundred yards of Paradise; and he offered the collector a handsome commission if he would help him to dispose of it. When the money had been gathered in for the quarter, the collector came and discounted the imam's document, returning it to him as equivalent to two hundred piastres of the tithes collected. When called upon for an explanation, the collector said that the document had been given to him by a peasant, and that, bearing as it did the imam's holy seal, he, the collector, durst not refuse it.

The imam was completely deceived. He thought that the Jew had sold the deed at a discount to some of his borrowers who were in arrears, and of course he had to receive it as being good as gold. Nevertheless the Jew was not forgotten, and the imam determined to have him taken into court and sentenced if possible. His charge against the Jew was that he, the chief priest of the province, had taken pity on this Jew, a wretched man in the terrible condition of having no future of happiness to look forward to after death. As he had hitherto borne an irreproachable character and as he had also, by the by, a small debt against the mosque, which it was desirable to balance, he, the imam, thought he would give this Jew two hundred yards of Paradise, which he did.

"Now, gentlemen," said the imam, turning to the kadis,

"What do you think this ungrateful dog goes and does? He actually has the effrontery to sell this valuable document; and, behold, it was brought back to me only this very morning as part payment of taxes in arrears due to the mosque. Therefore, I say that this Jew has committed a great sin and ought to be punished accordingly."

The kadis now turned to hear the Jew, who, the personification of meekness, stood as if awaiting his death sentence. With the most innocent look possible, the Jew replied, when the kadis asked him what he had to say for himself:

"Effendim, it is needless to say how much I appreciate the kindness of our imam, but the reason that I disposed of that valuable document was this. When I went to Paradise I found a seat, and measured out my two hundred yards, and took possession of the further inside end of the bench. I had not been there long when a Turk came and sat beside me. I showed him my document and protested against his taking part of my seat; but, gentlemen, I assure you it was altogether useless. The Turks came and came, one after the other, till, to make a long story short, I fell off at the other end of the seat, and here I am. The Turks in Paradise will take no heed of your document, and either will not recognize the authority of the imam, or will not let the Jews enter therein.

"Effendim, what could I do but come back and sell the document to men who could enter Paradise, and this I did."

The kadis, after consulting together, gave judgment as follows:

"We note that you could not have done anything else but sell the two hundred yards of Paradise, and the fact that you cannot enter there is ample punishment for the wrong committed. But there is still a grievous charge against you, and, if you can clear yourself of that charge to our satisfaction,



Sebah

"BULLOCK-WAGGONS HALT IN THE NOONDAY HEAT AT A TURKISH VILLAGE"

To face page 144

you will be at once discharged. How much did the document cost you and what did you sell it for?"

"Effendim, it cost me two hundred piastres, and I sold it for two hundred piastres."

This statement having been proved by the production of the deed in question, and by the testimony of the tithe-collector who had given the deed to the imam for two hundred piastres, the Jew was acquitted.

STORIES ABOUT ALBANIANS

STORIES ABOUT ALBANIANS

THE GREAT MAN
YANAKO THE BRIGAND
HOT COFFEE

THE GREAT MAN

THE Albanian often leaves his home at an early age. If he stays at home to get married—and sometimes he is married at fifteen—he sets out very often on the day after his marriage in order to earn money for his wife and his future children. And as a rule he does save. He saves every farthing of money he can, and lives like a monk until he returns home. His whole ambition is to own a hut and a little bit of land which his wife will work on and cultivate while he dreams of better times in the distant future. His revolver and his dagger he already had when he took unto himself a wife. Both revolver and dagger have silver hilts, and on his waistcoat there are silver buttons. He is honourable and proud with a distinct aim in his life and, should death not surprise him, he generally reaches his goal.

The following story is told not amongst the Albanians, but amongst the Greeks and Turks from whom I frequently heard it.

Three Albanian youths, married youths, left their country together and parted for the different occupations of life that fortune brought them. Chance brought two of these Albanians to meet again after thirty years of honourable though scantily remunerated toil ; and the first thing they spoke of, after the usual preliminary salutations had been exchanged, was of their homes and the hope they each had of returning. They spoke of their young wives—for though, as a matter of fact, those wives were no longer young, everything

seemed to them as it was thirty years ago. They spoke of their children, and of their parents, who had died in the meantime. Finally they contemplated and sighed, for the Albanian is not given to much talk.

Then they spoke of themselves, the three that had left the little village so long ago ; and it only remained to know what had happened to Yoanno. Petro asked his friend what had become of Yoanno, the brightest of the three. Stefo assured Petro that Yoanno was "a very great man indeed." "Owing to some foolish notion," quoth Stefo, "Yoanno will not return home, but indeed I am sure that he has enough to get the hut and the bit of land. Yes ! Yoanno is a very great man."

Petro was impressed by these hints of extraordinary success ; and, after a moment's silence, he asked his friend if by any chance Yoanno had become the gardener to a pasha. Stefo answered reproachfully that he had become no such thing as a gardener. But "Yoanno has become a very great man."

After a long silence Petro, whose curiosity was strongly excited, ventured to ask very humbly if Yoanno was a servant to his Imperial Majesty, but Stefo only answered with a reproachful look which was followed by a long silence. Perhaps he was hurt at his friend not understanding what he meant by a great man. At all events they both smoked on in silence, and they both became immersed in thought ; but Petro's inquisitiveness at last prevailed and he apologetically inquired if by any chance Yoanno had become an officer in the service of his Majesty. A long silence followed, for Stefo, whose temper was, perhaps, slightly ruffled, said : "I have told you, have I not ? that Yoanno is a great man. Well, isn't that enough ? Our Yoanno is a great man. Don't you hear ? "—and a long silence followed.

After a longer break in the conversation than anyone living in the West could believe possible, Petro again ventured a wild guess at what his friend Stefo could really mean by the phrase "a great man." "Is our Yoanno by chance the Grand Vizier of Turkey?" he asked. But Stefo shook his head slowly, pitying his friend's evident lack of intelligence.

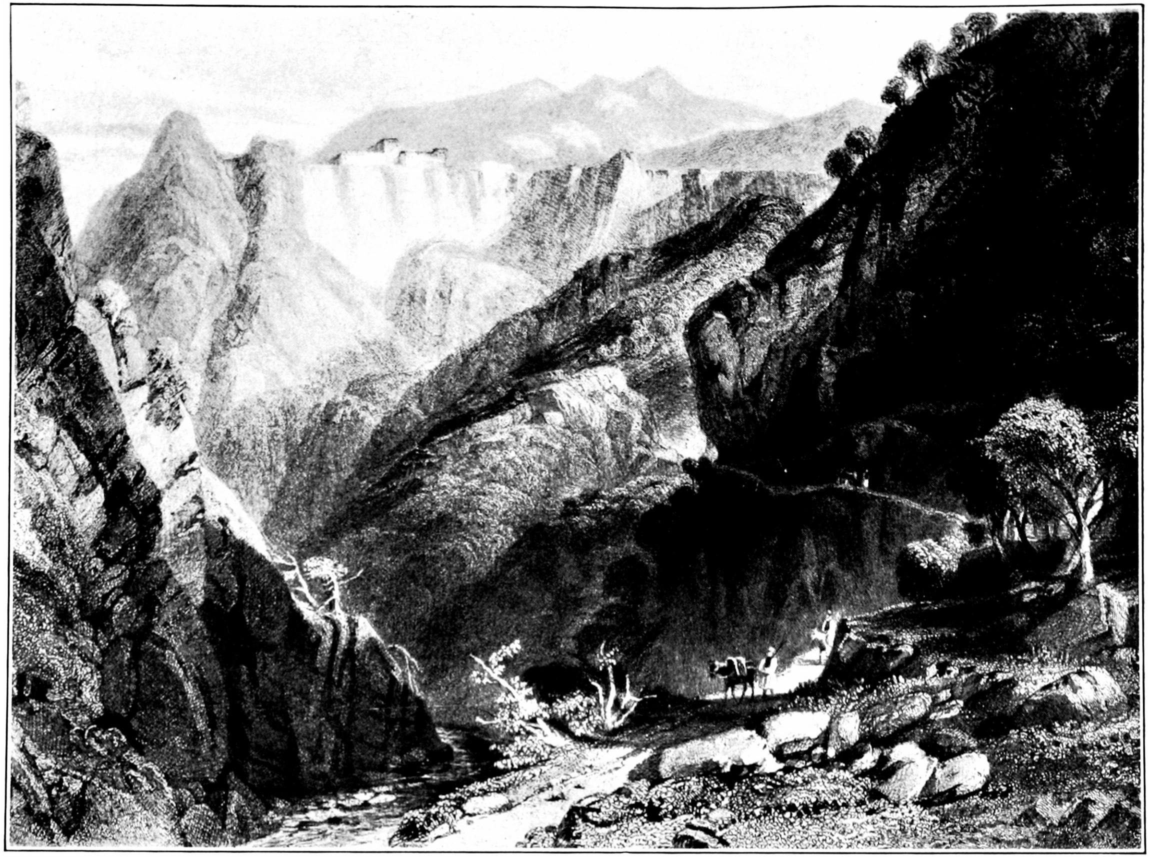
"No," said he at last, "but nevertheless our Yoanno has become quite a great man"—and, waxing warm at the thought, he explained to the other's astonishment that Yoanno was the owner of the largest trotter shop in Tophané, Constantinople. Why, he was the happy possessor of eighty of those basins wherein sheep's trotter soup is served out to customers, and he actually had ninety wooden spoons—ten more than was absolutely necessary in such an establishment!

YANAKO THE BRIGAND

WHILE travelling on one occasion in the interior of what was then European Turkey, I stopped at an apparently deserted village not more than a day's journey from Monastir. Night was coming on, but my Albanian servant, Halim, assured me that it was indispensable for me to continue travelling, as the district which we were traversing was terrorized by a certain brigand. Apparently this robber, whose name I did not catch, was held in far greater respect locally than any of the native chiefs or than any of the Turkish officials, and Halim himself seemed to waver between pride in his lawless countryman and fear for my safety.

The two Turkish soldiers who constituted my escort corroborated what Halim said about the robber, and strongly seconded the servant's proposal that, after the horses had been fed and allowed to rest for a while, we should all push on with the greatest speed. Their objective was a Turkish military post which they expected to make very early next morning.

Accordingly I dismounted; and, while the horses were being fed in a big stable that seemed to be ownerless, I strolled into the one dilapidated inn or coffee-house of which the place boasted. There was no landlord or attendant visible, and there was only one customer, besides myself. He was a small, silent man, evidently an Albanian by his look, and with him was a dog, which apparently belonged to him. The man sat on a bench sipping his coffee while the dog lay on some hay underneath.



VALLEY OF THE SULI, THE ANCIENT ACHERON, ALBANIA

To face page 152

The Albanian turned on me a keen pair of eyes, the fierceness of which was counteracted, however, by the very courteous and high-bred manner in which he wished me good day. Such banal salutations have a way of becoming extremely polite and even ornate in countries where human life is cheap, and where there is no law save the law of the sword. The same phenomenon is also found in all countries where the duel flourishes, and where the slightest discourtesy makes swords fly from their scabbards. Witness Japan in the days of the Samurai. Under the iron law of honour that prevailed at that time, two warriors had to fight to the death if their sheathed swords as much as touched one another accidentally. All sorts of trifles made a duel necessary. And as a consequence of this state of things no people ever used more elaborate honorifics than those Japanese used in their most ordinary conversation. The greater the danger, the more polite the language. The less the danger, the curter and bluffer the style of salutation. And I might add that the braver the man in a dangerous land, the more polite and respectful his language; while the more cowardly a man in a safe land the greater his impoliteness.

The Albanian seemed indisposed, however, to start a conversation, and soon there was silence. Nothing was to be heard but the occasional noise made by my warlike but uncultured friend sipping his hot coffee, and by the sighing of the tired dog under the bench. Soon, however, this silence was rudely broken. A commotion was heard outside. Horses trampled, men shouted, and finally an Albanian bey, followed at a respectful distance by a numerous body-guard, entered the inn. He was a great bey. Gold and silver glittered on his brilliantly coloured dress, and the very way in which he breathed seemed meant to advertise his importance. His overbearing manner was heightened and set off by the

silence of his followers and by their restrained, respectful movements.

For some time the great bey strode up and down the floor bellowing for the *café-je*. But in some of the cafés which existed at that time in the wilds of Albania there seemed to be no owners at all. They had died or been killed in a row or gone off on a raid into Macedonia. The café remained open, and people strolled in and made coffee for themselves and used the woodwork for lighting fires until at last the place gradually fell to pieces or the *café-je* turned up with a brand-new wooden leg and resumed business.

Finally, the bey sat down in no pleasant humour, but his followers remained standing until they had his permission to do likewise. That permission he did not give, and the whole suite trembled with fear. At this moment, however, the dog woke up, evidently in the best of humour, and approached the bey, wagging his tail. This familiarity seemed to offend his Highness, however, and drawing a ramrod from his jewelled pistol—there *are* ramrods in some of the Albanian pistols—he struck the dog a cruel blow on the nose. The dog howled and took refuge under his master's bench. The silent little figure on the bench had been looking on without moving a muscle, and in a mild tone it now inquired why the mighty bey had struck his " own brother."

Had a bomb suddenly exploded in the room the consternation of the bey and his suite could hardly have been greater. For nearly a minute the great man and his followers were struck dumb and paralytic by the sheer impertinence of the question and by the quiet confidence of the man who put it. Then the bey jumped to his feet, whipped out his pistol, and levelled it at the little man. But beyond letting his right hand drop casually into the folds of his ample and multiple waist-band, the little man did not move in the least. He

stared straight into the barrel of the mediæval pistol, and, to judge by the confident expression of his face, he seemed to see nothing inside. Probably there *was* nothing inside, for the bey refrained from pulling the trigger. He had evidently expected his insulter to disappear, and had never calculated on the little man's perfect coolness.

"Fire!" cried the little man contemptuously, but the bey still refrained from drawing the trigger. "Coward!" quoth the other, "if you do not fire, I will smite you across the face as you smote just now your brother, the dog."

On hearing this second insult hurled at their revered leader, the clansmen all grasped their weapons, but the extraordinary placidity of their one opponent made them hesitate to do anything more. The little man spoke with an air of authority which gave them pause. Surely there was some mystery here. The man was a powerful magician, or he was invulnerable, or he had followers within hail and was not so defenceless as he looked.

"Fire, coward!" repeated the unknown one, but the bey and his men seemed to be hypnotized. The muzzle of the chief's pistol gradually sank until the weapon disappeared in the folds of the variegated national cincture which he wore. The followers confined themselves to asking the little man hotly if he knew whom he had insulted. Then they went on to tell him who the bey was, and how great and rich and unforgiving he was, how many clansmen he had, how sure retribution was to overtake anyone who had insulted him. They were going back into the ancient history of the bey's family when the stranger stood up and thanked them for telling him who "the coward" was. "For now," he said, "I know him."

"And if you want to know who *I* am," continued the unknown, speaking for the first time in a loud and menacing voice, "then know ye that I am Yanako the Brigand."

Having said this he sat down and had another resounding sip at his coffee. But when he raised his head again a moment afterwards the room was empty. As soon as the dreaded name "Yanako" was pronounced the bey had turned pale as death, and had bolted unceremoniously for the door, through which, however, his followers had already escaped before him. Immediately after there was a scurry and a trampling outside, then a receding sound of horses' hoofs which grew fainter and fainter in the distance.

For a moment I was sorry that I had not taken part in the hasty exodus myself, but Yanako did not molest me. He did not even speak to me as I rose to go, but his parting obeisance was courtesy itself. Late next evening I reached Monastir without having had a single adventure by the way.

HOT COFFEE

SPEAKING of the Albanian, there is about him a certain stoicism worthy of an ancient Spartan or of an American Indian. The following story will illustrate what I mean.

An Albanian bey once came from his distant village to pay his respects to the newly appointed Turkish governor of the nearest town. His followers accompanied him, as is always the custom when an Arnaout chief travels. With the usual Oriental ceremony and politeness the governor had his visitor ushered into his private room. He also offered him cigarettes, and, clapping his hands, he ordered coffee to be brought for the bey and his men.

In grave and dignified silence the chief and his clansmen smoked and contemplated, but never a word did they utter, nor did they make any sign beyond the conventional raising of the hand to the forehead to signify that they were getting on very well, thank you ! Soon the coffee was brought into the room and served to the chief and his followers. The bey had never had coffee served to him in his life before, but it looked an insignificant little cup, and, Cossack style, he drained that cup at one gulp. A sudden spasm passed over his features when he did so, but it was gone in an instant and he never uttered a word.

The governor spoke affably to the bey on various matters, but could get nothing out of him in the way of conversation save a shake of the head by way of assent, or a throwing back

of the head by way of dissent. The host, in desperation, finally asked the Albanian if he would not care for another cup of coffee.

Upon this the visitor seemed to awaken out of a dream, and, turning to the governor, he said in a tone of deep conviction, "If there's a man in the world that can take two of these things let him come forward" (*Eki echain varsa, maidana Chicsun!*)

So saying the bey got up, and with his followers left the house of the astonished Turk, who did not until long afterwards learn the explanation of this strange conduct on the part of a trusted and Turcophile chief. The coffee had been served boiling hot, as Turkish coffee always is served, and as good coffee always should be served. The bey did not know this, consequently he scalded all the inside of his mouth ; but he felt that in the presence of his followers it would be undignified of him to betray any sign of the agony which he endured. Worst of all, so far as the Turks were concerned, he was half convinced that it was all a cruel trick which the governor had played on him.

STORIES ABOUT CAMELS AND ASSES

STORIES ABOUT CAMELS AND ASSES

THE TALE OF THE CAMEL

The camel was once asked where he preferred to walk; on the rising ground or on the falling ground. "What, then, hath become of the level places?" quoth the camel.

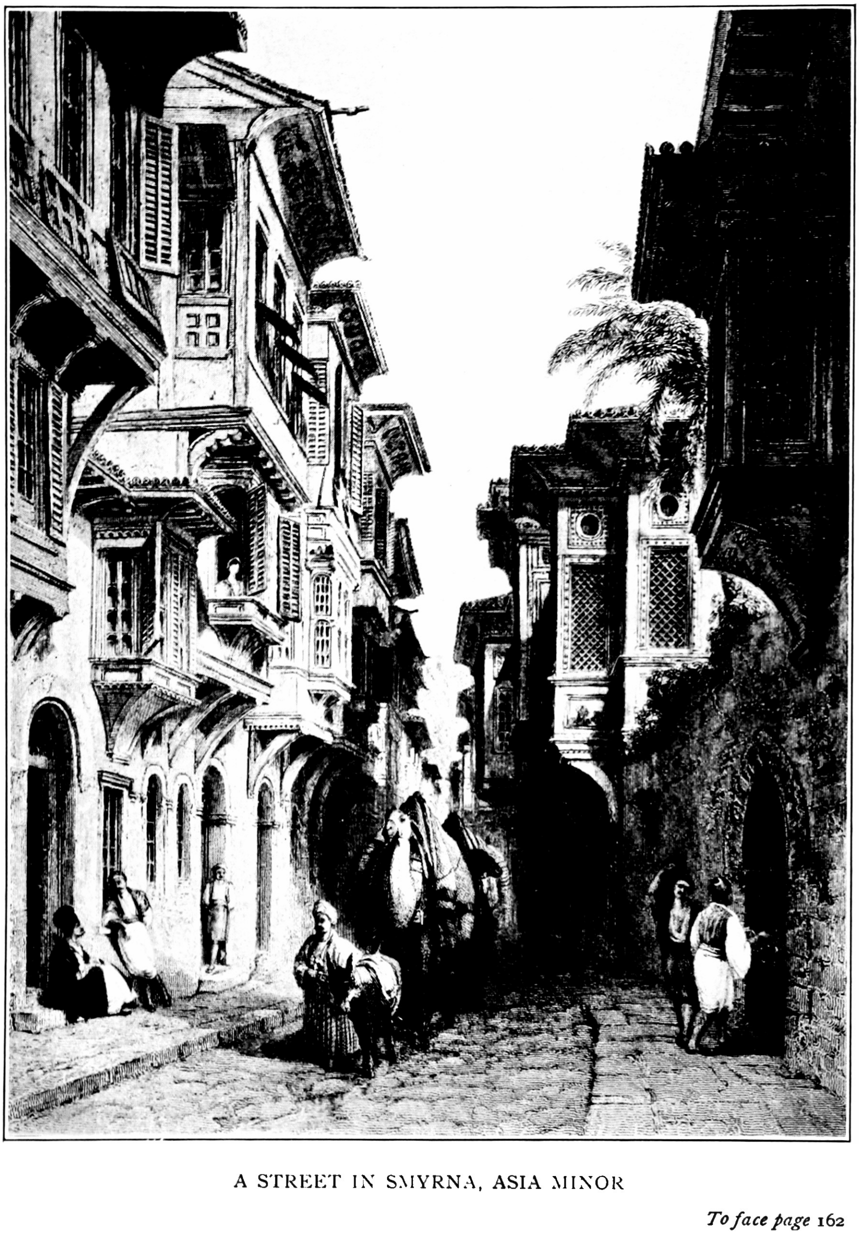
Old Turkish Saying

TO-DAY, as a thousand years ago, the camel caravan is one of the most picturesque and distinctive features of life in Asia Minor and Arabia. Despite the railways that have been constructed throughout the Ottoman dominions, the long, slow caravan of camels still holds its own as a means of communication in the wilder parts of the country. In the deserts, of course, the camel is absolutely supreme, and can afford, for many years, to sniff with contempt at railway engines, at motor-cars and even at aeroplanes. It may be taken for granted, indeed, that it will sniff at no matter what invention may happen to come along. And the camel is entitled to sniff, for it is a bit of a scientist itself. Mr. Purser, the General Manager of the Smyrna-Aidin railway, once told the authors that he would sooner take a camel's track from one place to another than the plan of any engineer. "The camels," quoth he, "are God's own engineers. They never make mistakes." And in the book of the Koran, entitled "The Overwhelming," the Prophet Mohammed takes the same view, choosing out the camel as a peculiarly striking instance of Allah's wisdom.

Some of the caravans are from six months to a year on the road. With the increased speed of ships and the increased

use of wireless at sea, it will soon come to pass—if it has not come to pass already—that the man who wants travel combined with complete isolation from the world for the longest possible period, must either go with explorers into the frozen snow of the Poles, or else with "the ship of the Desert" into the burning sands of the Sahara. One thing certain, at all events, is that these camel-drivers have plenty of time to invent stories and superstitions about the melancholy and dignified beast which they spend so much of their lives in looking after. And it is easy for them to do this as there is no domestic animal so supercilious, whimsical, mysterious and full of character as the camel. One is always *fort intrigué par le chameau*, owing to the fact that one can never quite make out what it has got to be proud of. But, though proud, its air is always one of Byronic sadness and unfathomable gloom. It manages at all times, even when asleep, to convey an impression of bitter but ineffectual protest against humanity. Its life, like that of a suffragette in jail, is a constant but repressed protest against man-made laws. It is the only animal, save man, which weeps; and its agonizing cry when it is being loaded up for the march is enough to make buttermilk curdle. This heart-rending wail suggests helplessness, pathos, anger, acute self-pity, and several other emotions, all at the same time. It is raised whether the load is light or heavy, and is always accompanied by the turning towards the load of a neck like the body of a boa-constrictor, surmounted by a shaggy and permanently embittered countenance. The camel's fascinating ugliness and the exaggerated but unconscious awkwardness of its every movement would ensure for it a triumphal career as a music-hall comedian, if it were only human. Even if it remained a beast, those qualities would as certainly make it a ladies' pet—if only it were not *quite* so big.

At certain seasons the camel is not absolutely harmless.



A STREET IN SMYRNA, ASIA MINOR

To face page 162

When the French were once preparing one of their expeditions from Casa Blanca a fat little soldier in tight red breeches went bustling about among a group of solemn seated camels, one of which, for some reason or other, he struck violently on the head with a stick. The offended beast made no remark, but went on chewing sedately; and the soldier, having got to what certainly seemed to be a safe distance, bent down over some luggage. This was the offended camel's opportunity. Suddenly stretching forth a phenomenally long, india-rubber neck, it caught the soldier on the posterior and lifted him off his feet. Dangling between heaven and earth, the unfortunate man "let a roar out of him" which would have put even a camel to the blush. He had good excuse for the roar, however, as about half a pound of flesh had been bitten clean out of him; and even more serious than this surgical operation was the fact that it had been performed by teeth which were anything but disinfected. Indeed, the worst thing about a camel's bite is the foul state of its incisors. Curiously enough, this rather serious accident only caused a gigantic shout of laughter to go up from every one who witnessed it, even from the grave Moors, who rolled, helpless with mirth, in the sand.

Another case in which the solemn camel provoked mirth in others occurred once at Aden when the members of the Eastern Telegraph Company's Staff were playing golf. One of them gave the ball a drive of such exceptional force that it flew off like a bullet. It did not fly in the right direction, however, but came plump against the forehead of a camel which was seated on the ground only a few yards away. The terrific crack which resulted was like the report of a pistol, and for a few seconds the golfers were sure that the animal's skull had been broken. But the phlegmatic beast did not get up or draw back its head or move its body by as much as a hair's breadth, and the only signs of embarrassment which

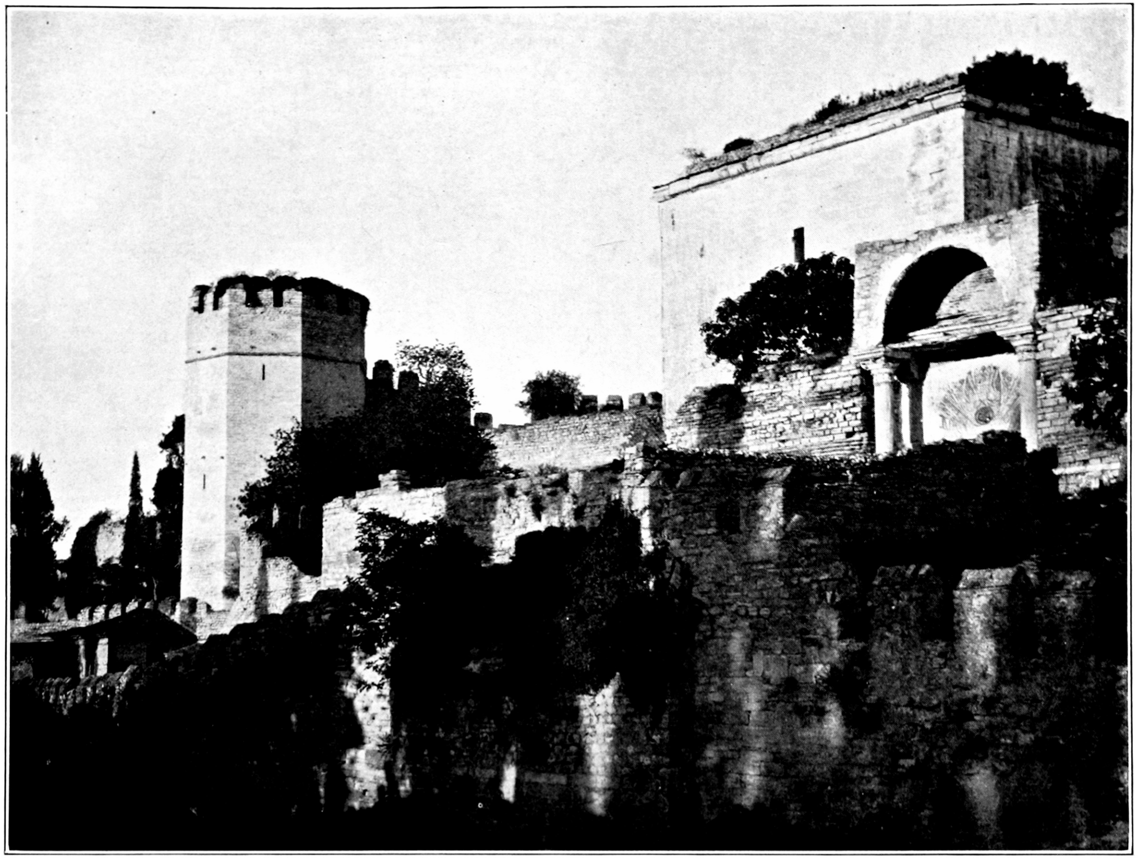
it gave were to stop chewing its cud for about forty seconds, and to close one eye for the same interval of time. As if there was some mysterious connexion between its left eyelid and its cud, it began to chew again as soon as its eye opened ; and it seemed to be as little affected by the boisterous laughter of the golfers as it had been by the violent stroke of their golf-ball.

In short, its whole conduct on this trying occasion was much more restrained and stoical than that of the sheep alluded to by the ancient poet of "The Goff" in his description of what happened at the last and deciding hole of the great match between Pygmalion and Castalio :

An harmless sheep, by fate decreed to fall,
Feels the dire fury of the rapid ball;
Full on her front the raging bullet flew,
And sudden anguish seized the silent ewe.

When the caravan owner suspects that he has offended one of his camels he will sneak away, undress himself, and leave all his clothes placed upon the ground in such a way as to give the impression that he himself is inside them and fast asleep. Hiding himself at some little distance, he patiently watches his camels feeding. Perhaps an hour or two later the offended camel stealthily approaches the clothes which he takes to be the recumbent form of his master. Suddenly the irritated beast will attack these garments with a vehemence that is impossible to describe ; and, having thus satisfied his wrath, he will then go back to his food. The camel-driver can afterwards approach him fearlessly, for the camel is quite satisfied with the punishment he has inflicted, and henceforth regards teh incident as closed.

The camel is known to sit down sometimes, when he is tired of life or the weather, and to refuse to get up. On such



WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE (INSIDE)

To face page 164

occasions nothing will persuade him to move, efforts of strength or severe punishment being alike useless and ineffectual. He has sat down to die. If food is brought to him he will eat it and greatly enjoy it apparently, but nevertheless he will not get up. If food is not brought to him he will not seem to desire it; and, if abandoned, he will sit there until death relieves him. The camel on such occasions is not sick. He is simply disgusted with himself and his master and his surroundings, and with the general monotony of life. It is a clear case of "tools down"—the tools being the camel's four ungainly legs. The brute is on strike, and no inducement will make him begin work again.

I have compared the camel to a suffragette, and I might here add that this mysterious beast has some curious feminine traits. A camel easily takes offence if another camel is served with food before it, and, though it may be starving at the time, it will refuse to eat and will pout in silence with sad, pendulous under-lip. Also, it must be fed off a nice clean cloth: it will not eat out of a bucket. No animal "gets the huff" so easily as this unkempt and shaggy creature, and no animal is so fond of hunger-striking.

To return to the caravans, the most curious thing about them is that they are always led by a small donkey. This donkey proudly conducts from fifty to a hundred camels at an easy pace and with an air of assurance which is comical when it is contrasted with his small size as against the towering height and huge bulk of the shambling beasts behind him. From Bagdad to Konia and from Konia to the Hellespont, it is the little ass that always leads; horses, mules, and camels follow invariably in the rear.

Another curious point about these caravans is the fact that the donkeys always wear a different kind of bell from the camels and that the horses and mules wear a third kind of bell.

Regarding these two points there is an ancient Turkish folk-story which still circulates orally among the Ottoman peasantry but which has never yet been printed in Turkish. As taken down from the lips of the peasants themselves, that story runs as follows:

"When, in the days of the Prophet (to whom be peace!) the oldest caravan owner in Bagdad was nearing his end, his friends and relatives were much distressed by the fact that though his case was hopeless and his agony very great, death would not come to relieve him. Mohammedans believe, in such cases, that it is the ill-will of some wronged person which thus keeps the soul imprisoned in a tortured body that ought by the law of nature to be dead. Consequently the servants and the acquaintances of the dying man were brought day after day by his relatives to wish the old camel-driver forgiveness, a speedy and peaceful deliverance, and a long repose after his honest and laborious life. But the agony continued, and the patient seemed unable to pass away peacefully as those who loved him wished.

"His sons then brought to him from far and near every person who might possibly, they thought, have a personal grudge against him, and whose dislike might thus prevent the weary and suffering soul from going to its rest. But it was all in vain: the agony continued and the prospects of release seemed as remote as ever. The old man had grown utterly weary of life and his constant prayer was now for death. He agreed with his relatives that he must have an enemy who had not forgiven him; but who could that enemy be? Every one in the neighbourhood with whom he ever had any dealings had already been brought to his bedside and had prayed to Allah that eternal repose might speedily be his.

"Finally, one of his sons thought that perhaps the animals with which he had lived and travelled all his life bore him a



THE WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page 167

grudge, so the oldest camel was led up to the open door of the hut and allowed to project its long neck and sad, unkempt physiognomy into the room where its owner lay dying. The old man begged forgiveness for any injustice that he might have committed towards it or towards any of the other animals.

"The camel answered: 'Alas, master! sad indeed it is that your time has come, and all of your animals deeply feel for you in your sufferings and your prolonged agony. You have ever been a good and kind master to us, and for nearly one score years and ten I myself have followed you in cold and in heat, sometimes with no water and no food, nay, not even with the bristly cacti to appease my hunger and quench my thirst. But neither I nor my companions ever grumbled, though, verily, in the great heats of summer the loads were sometimes very trying. Master! we forgive you for all the sufferings we had to endure in your service, and for all the fatigue and the hunger and the thirst that we had to put up with; but, alas! how can I or my brethren ever forgive the humiliation we had to submit to on each journey—the deep humiliation of always, always, being led by—*an ass!*'

"The sons and the old man himself begged hard for forgiveness, so finally the camel relented, and the aged caravan owner passed peacefully away. Before that wished-for release had come, the camels had, after prolonged negotiation, agreed to let the ass continue to lead them in future, only stipulating, however, that the bells worn by that democratic little beast should be different from the bells which decorated the more dignified and aristocratic camel.

"And here it might be remarked that these caravan bells have been likened by the Turks themselves to the advance of the Osmanli into Europe.

"The bells carried by the donkey pertly ring out 'Tchal-al-um! Tchal-al-um!' (Let us steal! let us steal), and their tinkling can be heard from afar.

"In plaintive, sweet, and questioning tones, the bells of the patient but unenterprising camels ask: 'Neré-den? Neré-den? Neré-den?' (From where? from where? from where?). The tinkling bells on the mules and horses, which usually bring up the rear of the large caravans, answer this question in short and hurried tones: 'Shurà-dan! Burà-dan! Shurà-dan! Burà-dan!' (From here! From there!)—meaning, presumably, from everywhere. While the bells ring thus, the camels' heads swing from side to side, pointing alternately to the right and to the left, while the huge beasts amble quickly and impatiently in the rear of the caravan. The point of the joke is that when the bell says 'Shurà-dan!' (From here!) the camels' heads are all pointing emphatically to the right, as if they meant that the whole tract of country out there should be annexed. When the bell says 'Burà-dan!' (From there!) the camels' heads point with equally strong emphasis to the country on the left.

"Even in the eyes of the Mohammedan camel-drivers this joke has now lost all the little point it ever had as a result of the gradual retreat of the Osmanli on their Asiatic base during the last three hundred years, and especially of their heavy territorial losses in the last Balkan war. But still this story is told.

"From Bassorah to Bagdad, from Jerusalem to Damascus, from Mecca to Medina—in short, all over Anatolia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Arabistân—these caravan bells still tinkle; and, in loyal observance of the compact made with the old camel-driver of Bagdad, the camels still follow the ass."

THE ASS THAT BRAYED

A CARAVAN on a long and arduous journey through the desert is sometimes obliged to leave behind such animals as can no longer carry their loads. These animals are given their liberty, while the food which they carried is divided among the other beasts of burden.

It so happened that one day both a camel and a donkey were in this way given their freedom at the same time. They could not keep pace with the rest of the caravan any longer, and the experienced caravan-drivers were convinced that their hours were numbered. Agreeably surprised at the change in their condition, the liberated ass and camel laid themselves down on the ground and watched their companions slowly disappearing from sight. They rested a long time, but the pangs of hunger at last made them get up and look for something to eat. Fortune favoured them, and of water and grass they found plenty. After many days of rest, and with as much food as they wished for, their strength returned to them and they lived as they had never lived before.

Spring came, and the ass in his exuberance *would* play with the sedate and supercilious camel, nor take heed of his melancholy companion's advice to cease these gambols and enjoy life. But as the days lengthened, and the sun became stronger, the ass became more of an ass than ever. Going up to the camel, he said, "I feel *so* happy that I must bray;" whereupon he kicked out as hard as he could, and raced round

and round the camel. "Aman," said the camel, "do what you like but don't bray. If you bray, evil days will surely come to us both."

The camel's restraining influence lasted some little time, but one day—an unhappy day for both ass and camel—the ass could not keep in his spirits any longer, and he brayed and brayed and brayed again. The camel pitied him, but the deed that would bring them evil hours was done, for it so happened that another caravan, in want of animals, heard that bray, and soon discovered both the ass and the camel. Both were taken and loaded with heavier loads than they had ever had to carry before. As they jogged along, side by side, the camel looked reproachfully at the ass and said: "Why don't you bray now? Who told you not to bray? Who begged and implored you not to make such a hideous noise? Who told you that the evil hour would come on both of us through your braying?"

The caravan came to a river too deep for the donkeys to ford, and they were consequently placed with their loads on the backs of the camels. In this way the ass which had brayed found himself perched on the back of the camel which had been the companion of his brief period of freedom.

Though the ass was now on his back, the sorrowful but far-seeing camel still looked down on him. And as he looked down he said: "You richly deserve that I fall and drown you. Your punishment, however, will be even greater, for you have lost for ever your freedom; but why, after having lost mine, I should be obliged to carry both you and your load is beyond my comprehension. Why don't you bray now?"



THE WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page 170

STORY ABOUT HIDDEN TREASURE

STORY ABOUT HIDDEN TREASURE

The Ragman's Treasure



HADJI AHMET DISCOVERS TREASURE

To face page 173

THE RAGMAN'S TREASURE

INSIDE the famous Seven Towers and near the famous Golden Gate itself there once lived an old ragman who earned a precarious livelihood by gathering not only rags, but also cinders and useless pieces of iron, which latter he sold to smiths.

Often did he moralize on the sad kismet that had reduced him to the task of daily labouring for his bread to make a shoe, perhaps for an ass. Surely he, a true Mussulman, might at least be permitted to ride the ass. His eternal longing often found satisfaction in dreams of wealth and luxury during his hours of sleep. But with the dawning of the day came reality and increased longing.

Often did he call on the spirit of sleep to reverse matters. But it was all in vain. With the rising of the sun began the gathering of the cinders and iron.

One night he dreamt that he begged this nocturnal visitor to change his night into day, and the spirit had said to him: "Go to Egypt, and it shall be so!"

This encouraging phrase haunted him by day and inspired him by night. So persecuted was he with the thought that when his wife called to him, from the door-step, "Have you brought home any bread?" he would reply, "No, I have not gone; I will go to-morrow." For he had thought that she had asked him, "Have you gone to Egypt?"

At last friends and neighbours began to pity poor Ahmet —for that was his name—as a man on whom the hand of

Allah was heavily laid. Everybody suspected that the old ragman had lost his reason, and they were sure of it when one morning he suddenly left his house, saying: "I go! I go! to the land of wealth." After vainly trying to detain him, his wife wrung her hands in despair, while the neighbours tried to comfort her. Poor Ahmet went straight on board a boat which he had been told was bound for Iskender (Alexandria) and assured the captain that he was summoned thither, and that the ship was bound to take him. Half-witted and mad persons being regarded by Mohammedans as holy, the captain offered no objection and Ahmet was conveyed to Iskender.

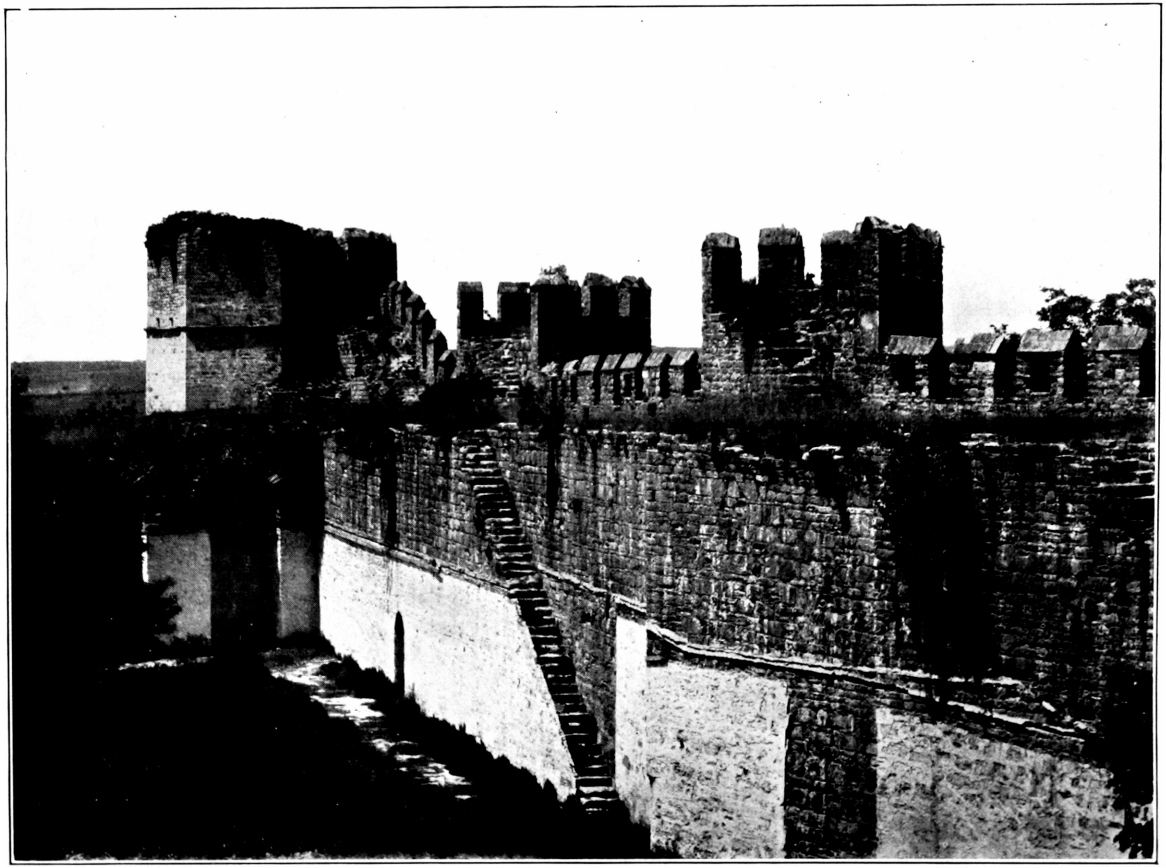
Arriving at Iskender, Hadji Ahmet roamed far and wide. He proceeded as far as Cairo in search of the luxuries he had enjoyed at Constantinople during his dreams, but which he expected to enjoy in Egypt during his waking hours. Alas for poor Hadji Ahmet! The only bread he had to eat was that which was given him by the charitable. Time sped on; even the most charitable were beginning to grow tired of the old Stamboul ragman; and his crusts of bread were few and far between.

Wearied at last of life and of suffering, Hadji begged Allah to let him die, and, wandering out to the Pyramids, he solicited the stones to have pity and fall on him. It happened that a Turk heard this prayer, and said to him:

"Why so miserable, father? Has your soul been so strangled that you prefer its being dashed out of your body to its remaining the prescribed time in bondage?"

"Yes, my son," said Hadji Ahmet, "Far away in Stamboul, with the help of God, I managed as a ragman to feed my wife and myself; but here am I, in Egypt, a stranger, alone and starving, with possibly my wife already dead of starvation, and all this through a dream."

"Alas! Alas! my father! that you at your age should be



WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE

tempted to wander so far from home and friends, because of a dream. Why, were I to obey my dreams, I would at this present moment be in Stamboul, digging for a treasure that lies buried under a tree. I can even now, although I have not been there, describe where it is. In my mind's eye I see a wall, a great wall, that must have been built many years ago, and supporting or seeming to support this wall are towers with many corners, towers that are round, towers that are square, and other towers that have smaller towers within them. In one of these towers, a square one, live an old man and woman, and close by this tower is a large tree. Every night when I dream of the place, the old man tells me to dig and find the treasure. But, father, I am not such a fool as to go to Stamboul and seek to verify this. Though oft-repeated, it is nevertheless a dream and nothing more. And in your case, father, it is the same. See what you have been reduced to by coming so far."

"Yes," said Hadji Ahmet, "it is a dream and nothing more, but you have interpreted it. Allah be praised, you have encouraged me; *Allah'-en yardim-la* (With God's help) I will return to my home."

And Hadji Ahmet and the young stranger parted, the one grateful that it had pleased Allah to give him the power to revive and encourage a drooping spirit, and the other grateful to Allah that, when he had despaired of life, a stranger should come and give him the interpretation of his dream. He certainly had wandered far and long to learn that the treasure was in his own garden.

In due course, and much to the astonishment of both wife and neighbours, Hadji Ahmet again appeared upon the scene not very much changed. In fact, he was the cinder-and-iron gatherer whom they had all known of old.

To all questions as to where he had been and what he had

been doing, he would answer: "A dream sent me away, and a dream brought me back. *Allaha Teshekkur ederim!* (I thank God)."

And the neighbours would say: "Truly he must be blessed."

The first care of Hadji Ahmet was to borrow a spade and a pick from an obliging neighbour. Provided with these tools he went out into his garden one night and began to dig at the base of the great tree that grew therein. He had only been digging a short time when a large case was exposed to view. In this case he found gold, silver, and precious jewels of great value. Hadji Ahmet replaced the case and the earth and returned to bed, much lamenting that it had pleased God to furnish woman, more especially his wife, with a long tongue, long hair, but with very short wits. "Alas," thought he, "if I tell my wife, I may be hanged as a robber, for it is against the laws of nature for a woman to keep a secret."

But becoming more generous after a time, when he thought of the years of toil and hardship she had shared with him, he decided to try and see if by chance his wife was not an exception to the general rule. Who knew but she might, after all, keep the secret? To test her, at no risk to himself and the treasure, he conceived a plan.

Crawling from his bed, he sallied forth and bought, found, or stole an egg. This egg, on the following morning he showed to his wife, and said to her:

"Alas! I fear I am not as other men, for evidently in the night I laid this egg; and, my dear wife, if the neighbours hear of this, your husband will be bastinadoed, bowstrung, and burned to death. Ah, truly, my soul is strangled."

And without another word Hadji Ahmet, with a sack on his shoulder, went forth to gather the cast-off shoes of horses, oxen, or asses.

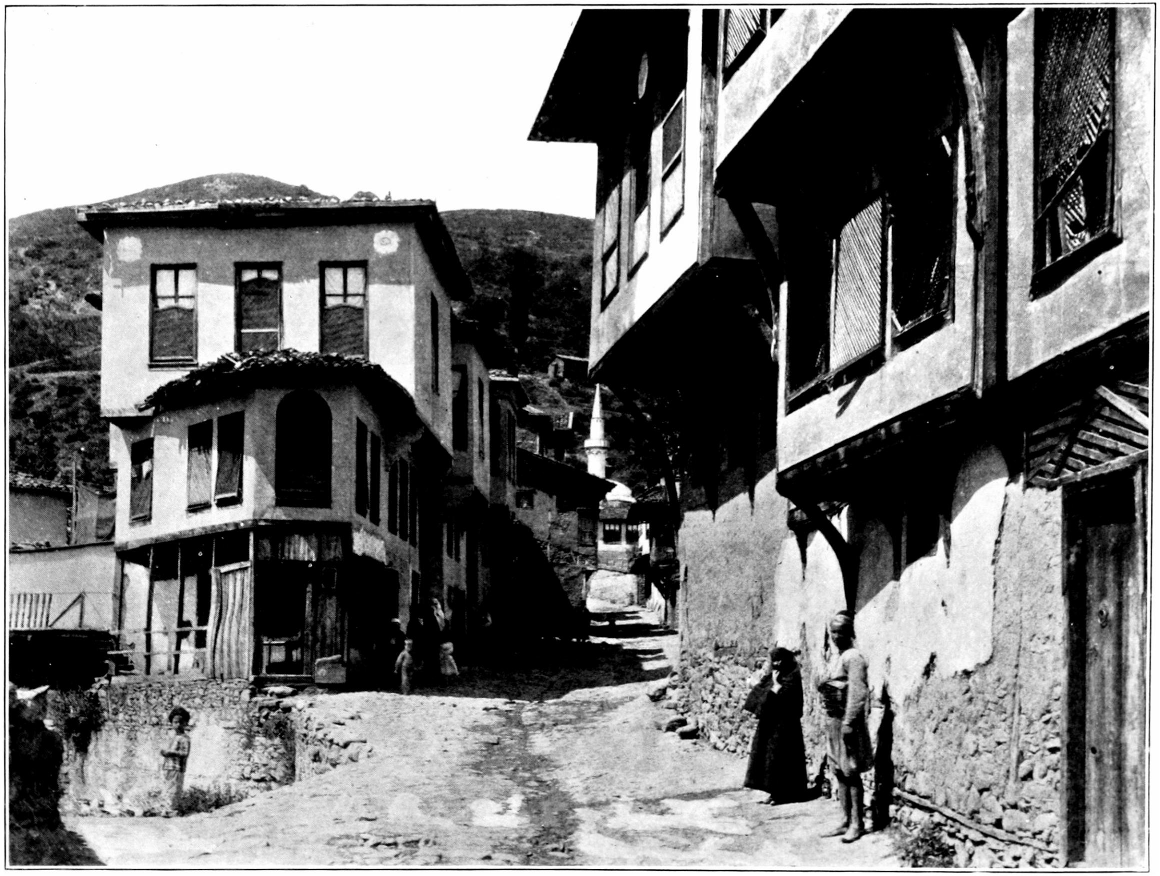
In the evening he returned, heavily laden with his finds, and as he neared home he heard rumours, ominous rumours, that a certain Hadji Ahmet, who had hitherto been considered a respectable man, had done something that was unknown in the history of man, to wit, that he had laid no less than a dozen eggs.

Needless to add that Hadji Ahmet did *not* tell his wife about the treasure. But he daily went forth as usual with his sack to gather rags and bones, iron and cinders, and, curiously enough, he always discovered, among the refuse which he had picked up, gold pieces and silver pieces, and now and then a precious stone. It was when he and his wife sat assorting his scrapiron in the evening that these remarkable finds were always made.

STORIES ABOUT BIRDS

STORIES ABOUT BIRDS

THE LANGUAGE OF BIRDS
THE SWALLOW'S ADVICE



Sébah and Joaillier

A TURKISH VILLAGE

To face page 181

THE LANGUAGE OF BIRDS

ACCORDING to that man of God, the holy Jalálu'ddín, Allah vouchsafed unto the Prophet Mohammed (on whom be peace !) a knowledge of the language of birds. There once lived, however, a simple hodja who also understood the language of birds, but he refused to impart his knowledge. One young man was very persistent in his desire to know the language of those sweet creatures, but the hodja was inflexible.

In despair, the young man went to the woods to listen at least to the pleasant chirping of the birds. By degrees this chirping conveyed to him a meaning, till, finally, he understood the birds to tell him that his horse would die. On returning from the woods, he immediately sold his horse and went and told the hodja.

" Oh, hodja, why will you not teach me the language of birds ? Yesterday I went to the woods and they warned me that my horse would die, thus affording me an opportunity of selling it and avoiding the loss."

The hodja was silent, and would not give way.

The following day the young man again went to the woods, and the chirping of the birds told him that his house would be burned. The young man hurried away, and, having sold his house, again went to the hodja and told him all that had happened, adding :

" See, Hodja Effendi, you would not teach me the language

of the birds, but I have saved my horse and my house by listening to them."

On the following day, the young man again went to the woods, and the birds chirped to him the doleful tale that on the following day *he* would die. In tears the young man went to the hodja for advice.

"Oh, Hodja Effendi! Alas! What am I to do? The birds have told me that to-morrow I must die."

"My son," answered the hodja, "I knew this would come, and that is why I refused to teach you the language of birds. Had you borne the loss of your horse, your house would have been saved, and had your house been burned, your life would have been saved."

THE SWALLOW'S ADVICE

A MAN one day saw a swallow and caught it. The bird pleaded hard for liberty, saying :

" If thou wilt let me go, thy gain will be great, for I will give thee three counsels that will hereafter be of use to thee."

The man listened to the bird and let it go. Flying to a tree close by, it perched on a branch, and said :

" Hearken and give ear to the three warnings that will guide thee. The first is, do not believe things that are incredible ; the second is, do not attempt to stretch out thine hand to a place thou art unable to reach ; and the third advice I give thee is, do not pine after a thing that is past and gone. Take these my counsels and do not forget them."

The bird then tempted the man, saying : " Inside of me there is a large pearl of great value ; it is both magnificent and splendid, and as large as the egg of a kite."

Now, hearing this, the man repented at having let the bird go, the colour of his face went ashen with sadness, and he at once stretched out his hand to catch the swallow, but the latter said to the foolish man :

" What ! Hast thou already forgotten the advice I gave thee, and the lie which I told thee, hast thou considered as true ? I fell into thy hands, yet thou wert unable to retain me, and now thou art sorrowing for the past for which there is no remedy."

Even such are those that worship idols, and give the name of Allah to their own handiwork. They have left aside God Almighty, and have forgotten the Great Bestower of all good gifts.

STORY ABOUT AN ASTROLOGER

STORY ABOUT AN ASTROLOGER

How Ahmet the Cobbler became the Chief Astrologer

HOW AHMET THE COBBLER BECAME THE CHIEF ASTROLOGER

EVERY day, year in and year out, Ahmet the cobbler measured the breadth of his tiny cabin with his arms as he stitched old shoes. To do this was his kismet, his decreed fate, and he was content with it. And why should he not be content? His business brought him quite sufficient to provide the necessaries of life for both himself and his wife. And had it not been for a coincidence that occurred, he would in all probability have continued mending old boots and shoes to the end of his days.

One day Ahmet's wife went to the hamam (bath), and while there she was much annoyed at being obliged to give up her compartment, owing to the arrival of the harem and retinue of the munajjim bashi, or chief astrologer to the Sultan. Much hurt, she returned home and vented her pique upon her innocent husband.

"Why are *you* not the chief astrologer to the Sultan?" she said. "I will never call you husband, or think of you as such, until you have been appointed chief astrologer to his Majesty."

Ahmet thought that this was another phase in the eccentricity of woman—a phase which would in all probability disappear before morning, so he took small notice of what his wife

said. But Ahmet was wrong. His wife insisted so much on his giving up his present means of livelihood and becoming an astrologer, that finally, for the sake of peace, he complied with her desire. He sold his tools and his ill-assorted collection of old boots and shoes, and with the proceeds purchased an inkwell and reeds. But this, alas! did not make him an astrologer, and he explained to his wife that her mad idea would assuredly bring him to an unhappy end. She could not be moved, however; and she insisted on his going into the highway, there to practise the art of astrology, with a view to becoming ultimately the chief astrologer of the Padishah.

In obedience to his wife's instructions, Ahmet sat down on the high road, and sought comfort in looking at the heavens and sighing deeply. While in this condition a hanoum came in great excitement and asked him if he communicated with the stars. Poor Ahmet sighed, saying that he was compelled to converse with them.

"Then please tell me where my diamond ring is, and I will both bless and handsomely reward you."

With this the hanoum immediately squatted on the ground, and began to tell Ahmet her story. She had gone to the bath that morning, and she was positive that she then had the ring. But every corner of the hamam had been searched, and the ring was not to be found.

"Oh! astrologer, for the love of Allah, exert your power to see the unseen, and tell me where my diamond ring is?"

"Hanoum Effendi," replied Ahmet, the instant her excited flow of language had ceased, "Hanoum Effendi, permit me to say that I perceive a rent——" He was referring, as a matter of fact, to a hole he had noticed in her shalvars or baggy trousers; but before he could complete the sentence, the hanoum interrupted him by jumping to her feet excitedly, at the same time exclaiming:



Daily Mirror

FORTUNE TELLER

To face page 188

"A thousand thanks! You are right! Now I remember! I put the ring in a crevice of the cold water fountain." And in her gratitude she handed Ahmet several gold pieces.

In the evening he returned to his home, and giving the gold to his wife, said: "Take this money, wife; may it satisfy you; and in return all I ask is that you allow me to go back to the trade of my father, and not expose me to the danger and suffering of trudging the road shoeless."

But the good woman was unmoved in her purpose. Until he became the chief astrologer she would neither call him husband nor think of him as such.

In the meantime, owing to the discovery of the ring, the fame of Ahmet the cobbler spread far and wide. The tongue of the hanoum never ceased to sound his praises.

Now it so happened that about this time the wife of a certain pasha had appropriated a valuable diamond necklace. The pasha, her husband, had consulted all the astrologers, hodjas, and diviners in Stamboul, Galata, Pera and Scutari, but they had one and all failed to discover the whereabouts of the missing article. As a last resort he determined to consult Ahmet the cobbler, whose fame as an astrologer was in every mouth.

The pasha went to Ahmet, and, in fear and trembling, the wife who had appropriated the necklace sent her confidential slave to overhear what the astrologer would say. The pasha told Ahmet all he knew about the necklace, but this gave no clue; and in despair the cobbler finally asked how many diamonds the necklace contained. On being told that there were twenty-four, Ahmet, to put off the evil day of his own exposure, said it would take an hour to discover each diamond. That being the case, would the pasha condescend to come on the morrow at the same hour, when, *In-shâ-Allah*, he might perhaps hear some news of his lost necklace?

The pasha departed, and no sooner was he out of earshot than the troubled Ahmet exclaimed in a loud voice :

" Oh woman ! woman ! what evil influence impelled you to choose the wrong path, and to drag others with you ! When the twenty-four hours are up, you will perhaps repent ! But then, alas ! it will be too late. Your husband gone from you forever !—without a hope of being ever again united to you, even in Paradise ! "

Ahmet was referring to himself and his wife, for he fully expected to be cast into prison on the following day as an impostor. But the slave who had been listening gave another interpretation to his words, and, hurrying off, told her mistress that the astrologer knew all about the theft. The good man had even bewailed the separation that would inevitably take place. Filled with fear, the pasha's wife hastened to plead her cause in person with the astrologer. On approaching Ahmet, the first words she said, in her excitement, were :

" Oh learned hodja, you are a great and a good man ! Have compassion on my weakness and do not expose me to the wrath of my husband ! I will do any penance and make any reparation you may order, and, moreover, I will pray for you five times daily as long as I live."

" How can I save you ? " asked Ahmet. " What is decreed, is decreed ! "

As a matter of fact, Ahmet had not the remotest idea of what the good lady was talking about.

" If you won't pity me," continued the hanoum, in despair, " I will go and confess to my pasha, and perhaps he will forgive me."

Upon hearing this appeal Ahmet, still in the dark, said he must ask the stars for their views on the subject. The hanoum inquired if the answer would come before the

twenty-four hours were up. Ahmet's reply to this was a long and concentrated gaze at the heavens.

"Oh, Hodja Effendi, I must go now, or the pasha will miss me. Shall I give you the necklace to restore to the pasha without explanation, when he comes to-morrow for the answer?"

Ahmet now realized what all the trouble was about, and, in consideration of a fee, he promised not to reveal his fair client's theft on condition that she would at once return home and place the necklace between the mattresses of the pasha's bed. This the grateful woman agreed to do, and finally she departed invoking blessings on Ahmet, who in return promised to exercise his influence with the stars on her behalf.

When the pasha came to the astrologer at the appointed time, Ahmet explained to him, that if his Excellency wanted both the necklace and the thief, it would take a long time, as it was impossible to hurry the stars. But if, on the other hand, he would be content with the necklace alone, the horoscope indicated that the stars would oblige him at once. The pasha said that he would be quite satisfied if he could get his diamonds again, and Ahmet at once told him where to find them. The pasha returned to his home not a little sceptical, and immediately searched for the necklace where Ahmet had told him it was to be found. His joy and astonishment on discovering the long-lost treasure knew no bounds, and the fame of Ahmet the cobbler was the theme of every tongue.

Having received handsome payment from both the pasha and the hanoum, Ahmet earnestly begged of his wife to desist from her purpose and to be content and not to bring down sorrow and calamity upon his head. But his pleadings were in vain. Satan had closed his wife's ears to the voice of reason. Resigned to his fate, all he could do was to continue

his pretence of consulting the stars on behalf of the credulous. After mature thought he would transmit their communications to his client or assert that the stars had, for some reason best known to the applicant, refused to hold any communication with him on the subject of inquiry.

Now it came to pass that forty cases of gold were stolen from the Imperial Treasury, and every astrologer in Stamboul, Pera, Galata and Scutari having failed to get even a clue as to where the money was or how it had disappeared, Ahmet was approached. Poor man, his case now looked hopeless! Even the chief astrologer was in disgrace. What his punishment might be he did not know, but most probably it would be death. Ahmet had no idea of the numerical importance of forty; but, concluding that it must be large, he asked for a delay of forty days to discover the forty cases of gold. The interview took place in the Sublime Porte and, on its conclusion, Ahmet sadly gathered up the implements of his occult art and slowly directed his steps homewards. On the way he went to a shop and asked for forty beans—neither one more nor one less. When he had got home and laid the beans down before him he appreciated the number of cases of gold that had been stolen, and also the number of days he had to live. Knowing that it would be useless to explain in any great detail to his wife the extreme seriousness of the affair, he confined himself to taking from his pocket the forty beans and mournfully saying:

"Forty cases of gold, forty days, forty thieves; and here is one of them," handing a bean to his wife. "The rest," he added, "remain in their place until the time comes to give them up."

While Ahmet was saying this to his wife one of the thieves was listening at the window. The thief was sure he had been discovered when he heard Ahmet say, "And here is one of them," and he hurried off to tell his companions.

The thieves were greatly alarmed, but they decided to wait till the next evening and see what would happen then. When next evening came, they sent another of their number to listen and to see if the disquieting report of the first listener was not exaggerated. The second listener had not been long stationed at his post when he heard Ahmet say to his wife: "And here is another of them!" meaning another of the forty days of his life. But the thief understood the words otherwise, and in great alarm he hurried off to tell his chief that the astrologer certainly knew all about it, and also knew that he had been there. The thieves consequently decided to send a delegation to Ahmet, confessing their guilt and offering to return the forty cases of gold intact. Ahmet received them, and heard their confession of guilt. When they offered to return the gold, he boldly told them that he did not require their aid and that it was in his power to take possession of the forty cases of gold whenever he wished. He was a merciful man, however; he had no desire to see them all executed; and he would not betray them if they would go at once and put the gold in a place he indicated. This was agreed to, and Ahmet continued to give his wife a bean daily—but now with another purpose; he no longer feared the loss of his head, but he discounted by degrees the great reward he hoped to receive. At last the final bean was given to his wife, and Ahmet was summoned to the palace. He went, and explained to his Majesty that the stars refused to reveal at the same time the names of the thieves and the hiding-place of the gold. But whichever one of these two secrets his Majesty wished to know would be immediately made clear to him. The Treasury being low, the padishah declared that his sole desire was to get the gold. Ahmet then conducted the officers of the imperial household to the place where the gold was buried, and, amidst great rejoicing,

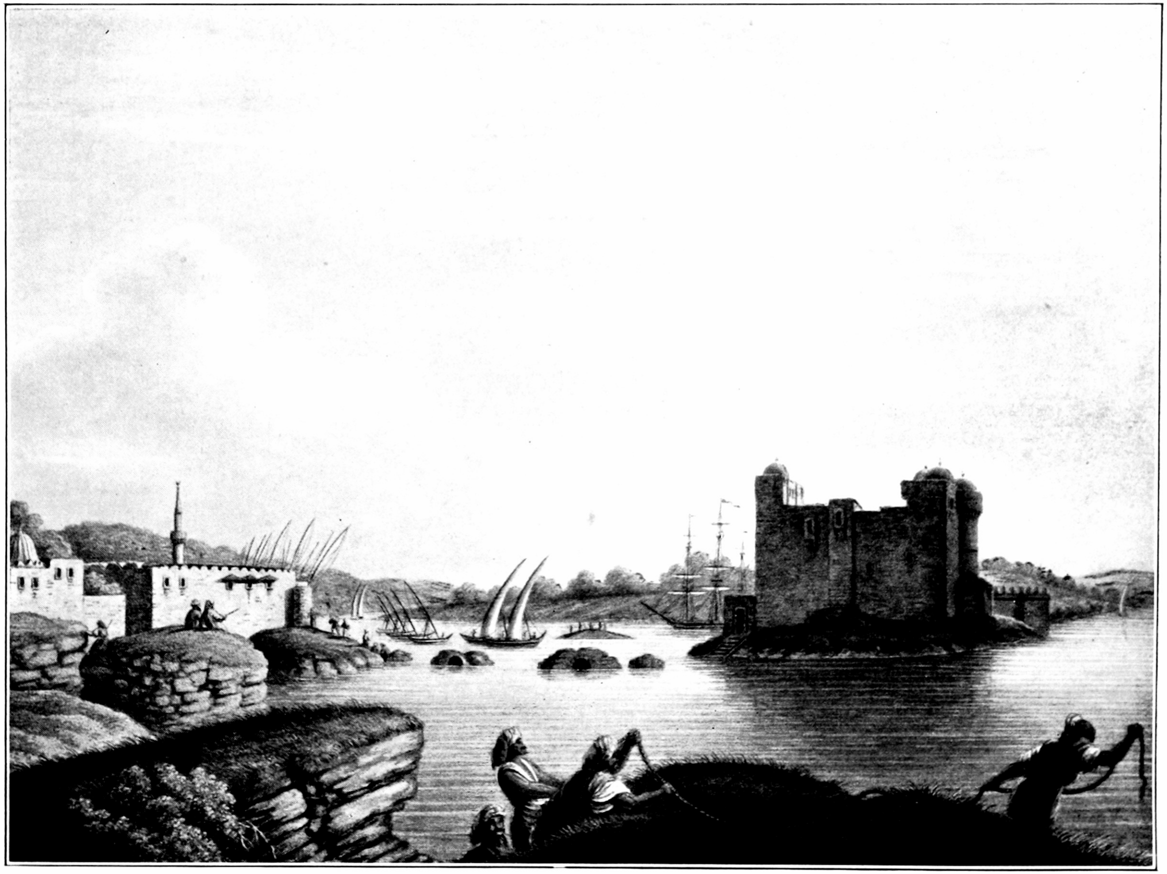
it was taken back to the palace. The Sultan was so pleased with Ahmet, that he appointed him to the office of chief astrologer, and thus the cobbler's wife attained her desire.

While walking one day in his palace grounds, accompanied by his chief astrologer, the Sultan experienced a desire to test the ex-cobbler's occult powers. With that object in view his Majesty caught a grasshopper, and, holding out his closed hand to the astrologer, asked him what it contained. Ahmet, in a pained and reproachful tone, answered the Sultan by an oft-quoted proverb : "Alas ! your Majesty ! the grasshopper never knows where its third leap will land it," alluding figuratively to himself, and the dangerous hazard of guessing what was in the clenched hand of his Majesty. The Sultan was so struck by the reply that Ahmet was never again troubled to demonstrate his powers.

STORIES ABOUT SAINTS AND SINNERS

STORIES ABOUT SAINTS AND SINNERS

THE SAINT WHO RODE ON PEOPLE'S BACKS
HADJI OSMAN OF BOKHARA
THE FORTY WISE MEN
HOW THE KHOJA SAVED ALLAH
HOW CHAPKIN HALID BECAME CHIEF DETECTIVE



PORT OF LATAKIEH

To face page 197

THE SAINT WHO RODE ON PEOPLE'S BACKS

SHEIKH ASSIFERI was known to every one in Latakieh, and, though he died about seventeen years ago, he is still remembered there and still spoken of with reverence by Christian and Mohammedan alike. So original indeed was his character, that it may be worth while to give here an account of his life and his death as it is told to-day by the inhabitants of Latakieh. I need hardly remind the reader that Latakieh is a small town on the Syrian coast. It was celebrated in ancient times, but it does not seem to have grown much since the days of the Crusaders. Were it not for its famous tobacco it would now in all probability be unknown in Europe.

As his title at once tells you, Sheikh Assiferi was a Moslem, but he was known to Christians as well as to Mohammedans. It was regarded by all as a privilege to be of any use to the sheikh. To the Moslem, of course, it was a very real and peculiarly great privilege, because he believed in the sheikh's sanctity. The Christian pretended it was a privilege because he feared to hurt the Moslem's feelings, and consequently to bring upon himself oppression in some of the forms known to all Christians living in Turkish towns where the Mohammedans are in the majority.

Nevertheless, in the eyes of the Christians the good sheikh had one very great failing. He was mad. Now madness is to

the Mohammedan a form of sanctity inspiring only reverence. Sheikh Assiferi's madness took, however, a form which sometimes led the uncircumcised to blaspheme. The holy man often honoured passers-by in the street by mounting and riding on their backs, should they chance to be going his way. If he happened to mount on the back of a Christian, the latter was obliged to carry him till such time as it pleased the sheikh to descend and patronize somebody else. The Mohammedan, of course, was greatly honoured and flattered. No doubt he realized, as he staggered along under the sanctified weight of the sheikh, that he was doing something pleasing to Allah, and laying up treasure for himself in heaven. The poor Christian had no such consolation ; but, though he may have thought a great deal and felt deeply, he never said anything, and always did his best to look pleasant and happy.

The sheikh would distribute his favours to high and low, quite irrespective of their social or financial position. Whether it was a long-haired Greek priest he was riding, or a rich Jew, or a portly pasha, or a thin Arab, or a wild Nuisiri hillsman was all the same to him. He had no theological prejudices in his choice of a mount, and would honour a Christian or a Jew or a half-pagan mountaineer just as readily as he would honour a Mohammedan. Sometimes, if many pedestrians were on the road, he would mount first one and then another ; and he was even known to jump occasionally on a woman's back. On such occasions the woman, whether Christian or Moslem, would generally totter under the sheikh's weight, being unused to carrying such a load. Naturally there could be no invidious distinction on the sheikh's part between Moslem women and Christian women. Besides, the Christian women dress and cover their faces in exactly the same manner as the Mohammedan women, Turkish and Arab.

The sheikh enjoyed many privileges, but perhaps the

greatest of them all, when we consider how strict the Mohammedans are about the seclusion of their women, was the privilege of entering the harem, or women's quarter, of any house which he took a fancy to visit. He used even to enter the ladies' haman (public bath). On such occasions the Christian women would rush away like a herd of frightened deer in order to hide their nakedness, but the Mohammedan women would struggle with one another as to who should be the first to kiss the holy man's hands, or even touch his body, quite unconscious of the fact that they had perhaps nothing, not even a wet towel, round their bodies. For to touch the holy man's body was to bring blessings on themselves and on those they loved. The women would on their return home tell their husbands of the good fortune that had befallen them that day, and great would be their joy if the saint had spoken to them. Sometimes he gave a blessing, and this event was never forgotten by the recipients. One hair from his head or beard would be treasured through life, and worn as an amulet or abracadabra. Afterwards it would be regarded—by Mohammedans, of course—as a family heirloom second only in sanctity to the beard of the Prophet.

No door was closed to the sheikh. He could visit any house he chose and stay there as long as he liked. If it was a Mohammedan house the owners always felt themselves to be highly honoured, and greatly were they envied by all their neighbours.

What was the secret of the sheikh's power? Well, in the first place he had all the traditional characteristics of the Eastern saint—he had an extreme devotion to prayer, he fasted often, he exhibited on all occasions a genuine contempt for money. Over and above this, however, he was credited with the possession of supernatural powers. During the whole course of the last Russo-Turkish War, mothers, fathers, sisters,

brothers, lovers, and children got all their news of their loved ones from Sheikh Assiferi. When they could bear the strain of anxiety no longer they would go to him and beg him to give them some account of their relatives at the front. This the holy one never refused to do, but willingly offered to go to Kars or to Plevna or wherever they asked him, and to let them know all about the health and the deeds of those in whom they were interested. He knew personally all the soldiers who had gone from Latakieh to fight against the Tsar, and thrilling are the tales he would sometimes tell of their stubborn bravery in the snow-covered trenches. Had he been alive at the time of the recent Balkan War, some London paper would probably have been anxious to engage him as its "own correspondent;" but, seriously, many of the stories which he brought from the front were afterwards found to be true. Very often, unfortunately, those stories dealt with the mutilation, death, or capture of the beloved one, with the privations which he endured, with the defeats which he witnessed.

Sheikh Assiferi was inexpensive to those who employed him as their war-correspondent. In fact he got nothing at all as salary, and his expense account was *nil*. His method of procedure was simplicity itself. He had but to go to the water's edge, stepping over the remains of the Phœnician tombs on the sea-shore, to take off his cloak, and to throw it upon the water. He then seemed to fall into a trance, in the course of which his spirit visited the Moslem armies. His body would lie motionless on the beach for many hours, and some of the people told a curious tale—not generally credited, however—of how, during that period of trance, he used to be fed by bees, which adroitly dropped their honey into his open mouth. No one would ever dream of disturbing him; and when his spirit returned he always seemed to wake up refreshed and invigorated. Then he would proceed to tell his tale. He

had seen Ibrahim, and Abeddin, and Selim, and whatsoever other townsman it was that he had gone in search of, and had spoken with them. One was bravely carrying the flag of the Prophet in the thickest of the fight. Another had been unwell. A third had received a decoration, and so on.

The good news which he sometimes brought back would cause great rejoicing to all the people of Latakieh, and the sheikh was often called upon to undertake these spiritualist journeys in order to ease a mother's aching heart, or to maintain the confidence of an Arab maiden in her soldier lad. Daily on the beach would he prostrate himself in prayer while an anxious crowd gathered around him at a respectful distance, to watch him get ready for his journey and to pray fervently for his safe return. It is said that the good news of peace was first given to the people of Latakieh by Sheikh Assiferi. When some days later the Government confirmed that good news, the people prostrated themselves in the mosque, and in many other ways showed their gratitude to Allah for having sent to their town so holy a man as Sheikh Assiferi. Can anyone wonder that, after this "scoop"—as a journalist would call it—the good man's every utterance was regarded as being, verily, the voice of Allah Himself?

Every good Mohammedan must try to make the *hajj*, or pilgrimmage to Mecca, once in his life, and kiss the Black Kabba stone, and return purified. Before the construction of the Hedjaz railway, the journey was as long and dangerous as a mediæval pilgrimage to Jerusalem or St. James of Compostello. A very small percentage of the pilgrims ever returned, and while they were on the road there was no means of receiving news from them. Of those who could not write, only the vaguest and most unreliable rumours ever came back.

The people of Latakieh were in an exceptional position, however, for every day Sheikh Assiferi would bring them news

of their loved ones, and tell each family what he had said to the pilgrims, and if they were well provided for. When they started on their return journey he would likewise narrate to their friends the incidents of each day's march. Unfortunately he had often to tell of disease, of robbers attacking the caravans, of deaths, and of other kinds of misfortunes; but the people of Latakieh preferred to know the worst at once rather than be kept in painful suspense.

Often would he go to the governor, tell him that such and such a caravan was in difficulties, and insist on help being sent to it without delay. Inquiries were frequently made as to the accuracy of his inspirations, and the people say that the sheikh was always right. The Government sometimes contradicted him, issued reassuring statements (as governments *will* do), procrastinated—and was always wrong. As a rule, however, the local governor did his best to meet the sheikh's wishes. It may very often have been difficult for him to do so, but the holy man's popularity was such that promises at least of a satisfying kind had to be made or there would have been trouble. If the sheikh were seen to depart from the Government house dissatisfied there was no telling what the fanatical population might do. The officials realized this, and, as a rule, they skilfully avoided disputes with the Man of God.

That the Turks could tolerate the shiekh may seem to an Englishman almost inconceivable, but Asia Minor is not England, and the Turks are not as we are. They are profoundly convinced that a human interpreter of Allah's will is not as other men are, and the holier he is, the less is his intelligence to be gauged by that of his fellow creatures. Even the victim of catalepsy, when he falls down, is thought to be communicating with the Giver of Life, and no assistance of any kind is given to him. Where he falls, there he lies, and

the passers-by bend their heads in reverence—but do nothing more. Should anyone look on with too inquisitive a gaze he will probably be requested to move on.

Sheikh Assiferi, however, was mortal, and, in due course, the hour came for his spirit, which had roamed so often, to depart from its earthly tabernacle never to return. Many visitors he had daily, but among them one day was Azraïl, the Angel of Death. Gathering up all his strength with one final effort, he repeated a few times the Mohammedan creed (*La Illahu illallah*, *Mohammed Rasul Allah*), crossed his hands on his chest, the index finger of the right hand being pointed as a sign of belief in Islam, stretched out his limbs, and passed away. And, verily, he passed away in the odour of sanctity. He died, and Latakieh was stricken as by a calamity.

The entire population came to pay their respects to the body of the sheikh as it lay in a common deal coffin. It did not lie in state long, for the Moslem religion prescribes an early funeral, and soon it was borne to the cemetery on men's shoulders—shoulders of Mohammedans who earnestly competed for the honour of carrying such a very holy man to his last resting-place. All classes of the Mohammedan male population assisted in this pious task; but in any case a singular spirit of democracy always prevails around the bier of a dead Moslem. The *hamàl* (porter), the rich man, the beggar and the high dignitary all take their turn at bearing the coffin at least a step or two on its way to the grave, and there is always some one anxious to do his share of the work and acquire merit for himself thereby. But, for some reason or other, a Moslem funeral is seldom attended by women. The only women present are those who, like the Irish *keeners*, are hired to lament the dead.

The Mohammedan religion not only prescribes a speedy burial after death; it also directs that the funeral hurry along

with what we would consider to be indecent haste, instead of going slowly as with us. This is owing to the Islamic doctrine that the body is sentient after death and suffers torment till committed to the repose of the tomb. Thus in death as in life Turkish habits are the opposite of European habits. The Western European "hustles" and "scorches" all his life ; but, after death, he goes with extreme deliberation to the graveyard. The Turk is phlegmatic while alive ; but, as soon as the breath has left his body, he rushes to the cemetery at a pace that would win the respectful approbation of a joy-ride motorist.

When Americans wish to indicate that a man is slow they say that he would be overtaken and run down by a funeral, but that witticism does not hold good in Mohammedan countries. It is dangerous at times to get in the way of a Turkish funeral.

Its bearers constantly changing, the body is thus carried along until the open grave is reached. Sometimes blind men lead the way. The dead, so far as we know, are blind—so the Turks reason—and why should not their funerals be headed by living men who are sightless ?

But the dead Sheikh Assiferi was not blind. The corpse saw where it was going, and for some unknown reason it refused to go any farther when it reached the governor's house, which is on the road to the cemetery. Here, after the most desperate efforts to advance, the perspiring and thoroughly frightened bearers at last stood still. But even when fresh, willing hands came forward to assist, the bier remained as firm as a rock.

Great consternation naturally prevailed among the numerous mourners, and it increased with the failure of each fresh effort to carry the sheikh's body on to the grave. Latakieh was thunderstruck and very much alarmed, for it did not know what sort of calamity this extraordinary stoppage portended.



THE GREAT CEMETERY OF SCUTARI

To face page 204

The most stalwart youths in the town came forward at length with strong ropes, and these being made fast to the coffin, dozens of men hung on to each rope as if they were holding down a Zeppelin balloon. And, indeed, their object was nothing less than to keep the body from soaring upwards, for a rumour had got abroad that it was about to ascend into heaven. The town was unanimously of opinion, however, that this crowning calamity should not be allowed to happen, and that the holy man's corpse should be retained—by force if necessary—in his native Latakieh. Prayers were offered up to Allah, but still no progress was made, and both the coffin and the host of mourners remained standing opposite the Government House, strangely expectant, as if waiting for some great event. Finally another sheikh approached, and, after many prayers, listened at the head of the coffin to learn if perchance there was aught that the dead sheikh wanted done. And the corpse communicated with him. It bade him let the governor know that the dead body would never pass that door of injustice, false promises, corruption and tyranny until he promised to rule justly. On his knees and with blanched face the governor promised, whereupon the coffin lurched forward so suddenly that its bearers nearly lost their feet, while a great sigh of relief went up from the host of mourners and all the people looked as if an intolerable burden had been taken from them. And now the funeral wound its way through the solitude of the great cypress forest which lies like a vast pall thrown over the departed who sleep in the ancient graveyard of Latakieh. For it is a beautiful custom of the Turks to plant in their "Cities of the Dead," as they call their cemeteries, great numbers of funereal cypresses. This Oriental race is fond of symbolism—their "flower language" is quite as elaborate as that of the Japanese—and in this stately evergreen they seem to find the emblem of strength

and immortality. A better emblem they could hardly choose, for in Turkey the cypress attains its greatest magnificence and beauty. Its trunk is often of immense circumference and its lofty summit points, like a minaret, to heaven. The cypress is, moreover, the family bible, reminding them of such a birth, such a marriage, and such a death ; for they note down all these domestic events by the planting of a cypress tree. The result of this laudable practice is that the area of the magnificent cypress groves is constantly extending.

Beneath the trees the headstones cluster thickly. Very often they are of marble, owing to the cheap and inexhaustible supply of this valuable material which is to be had in most parts of Turkey. These headstones are shaped into rude representations of the human form, surmounted by a head covered by a turban. On the bust of the pillar is an Arabic inscription containing the name of the deceased without any enumeration of his virtues. The stones which mark the graves of women are adorned with a carving meant to represent a lotus leaf, and surmounted by a knob like a nail. In Turkey, as elsewhere, women spend much time in praying at the tombs of the departed, for whose repose they appeal to Allah, and from whom they solicit favours. In the accompanying illustration there is represented a woman, enveloped in her *yashmak* and *feridge*, performing this pious duty. On the grave—if it is flat—there is usually a trough or cavity for the reception of plants or flowers—offerings of pious affection to the dead. Sometimes lattices of gilt wire form aviaries over the grave of the beloved one. The Turks take peculiar delight in flowers and birds, and the amiable superstition of the survivor hopes to gratify her departed friend, even in the grave, by the odour of the one and the song of the other.

When they reached the grave the stalwart youths held the ropes still more firmly, for they feared that the sheikh's

body might even yet play some prank on them and be borne away to some other part of the earth or suddenly wafted heavenwards. And they were not going to take any risks of losing holy relics which would deprive Latakieh of a tomb second only in spiritual and temporal advantages to that of the Prophet himself at Mecca. The whole of that night they held on tightly to the ropes while masons dug a foundation for a *turbeh* or tomb, and ere the sun had risen again in the east the walls were already well advanced. Praise be to Allah! Sheikh Assiferi's body was for Latakieh, Latakieh alone!

The *turbeh* was built, and to-day when the sun sets you will see the cloaked Moslem women entering it one after another. Each of them has a piece of bread, a jug of water, and a small square of carpet whereon to kneel when she prays to Allah and communes with the dead sheikh, telling him her wants and her hopes, and begging for his powerful intervention with the Merciful, the Compassionate. They neither look to the right nor to the left. Each has her mission, and if we are to believe the stories that are told of miracles which take place, some of these women possess the faith that moves mountains. In proof of all the wonders I have narrated, the *turbeh* of Sheikh Assiferi stands to-day in Latakieh. What further proof can the reader want? He will also see, if he goes to Latakieh, that the tomb is overhung with rags tied there by grateful devotees whose petitions have been granted.

The old mad sheikh brought consolation to the people while he lived (although he *did* sometimes annoy the uncircumcised by suddenly jumping on to their shoulders). Consolation and hope he brings in death. In truth the *turbeh* of Sheikh Assiferi is never empty night or day, and the sorrow-stricken never leave it without feeling that their heavy load has been somewhat lightened, or that (what comes to the same

thing) strength to bear it has been vouchsafed to them by Allah the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The authors of this book freely admit that this Sheikh Assiferi story is not one that you could tell with a serious face in your club. It might create unfavourable comment on the subject of the narrator's veracity or sanity, to say the least of it. And yet the witnesses to the old sheikh's miracles are so numerous and so well entitled to belief, that we know Britishers who do not believe in the miracles of Christ to believe most implicitly in those of " the saint who rode on peoples' backs." And we must say that we ourselves are convinced that, when full allowance has been made for exaggeration and inaccuracy, Sheikh Assiferi did possess various mysterious powers, which three centuries ago would have led to their possessor being burned alive as a necromancer, but which are now given scientific names, such as telepathy, levitation, &c.

HADJI OSMAN OF BOKHARA

HADJI OSMAN was on the return from the hajj, that is, the pilgrimage to Mecca which every good Mohammedan makes at least once in his lifetime. Should he make the journey more than once, and kiss the Kabba (Holy Stone) which the angel Gabriel placed there, near to the last resting-place of the Prophet, then he becomes beloved of God and dear to the Prophet of God.

While resting in the pilgrims' house or tekkiyek of Sultan Selim at Damascus, Hadji Osman frequently went to the baths to ease his aching limbs and to cleanse his body, making it as white as his soul was. On the occasion of one visit he permitted himself for an instant to doubt the truth of the saying that "All creatures made by Allah are of use to mankind." To this impious questioning of the ways of the Most Holy, Hadji Osman was led by a contemplation of the immense and numerous dark red, and brown cockroaches which swarmed in the bath-house. "Of what use to man," asked the pious hadji, "can these cockroaches be?" He was sorry, a moment afterwards, that he had questioned the utility of the cockroach; but man is weak, and he had done it.

His punishment followed swiftly, for, while pre-occupied with this deep theological question, it chanced that he trod upon one of the creatures in question with his naked foot, slipped on the highly polished, wet, marble floor, and, falling, seriously bruised his left knee-cap. The pain was great, but

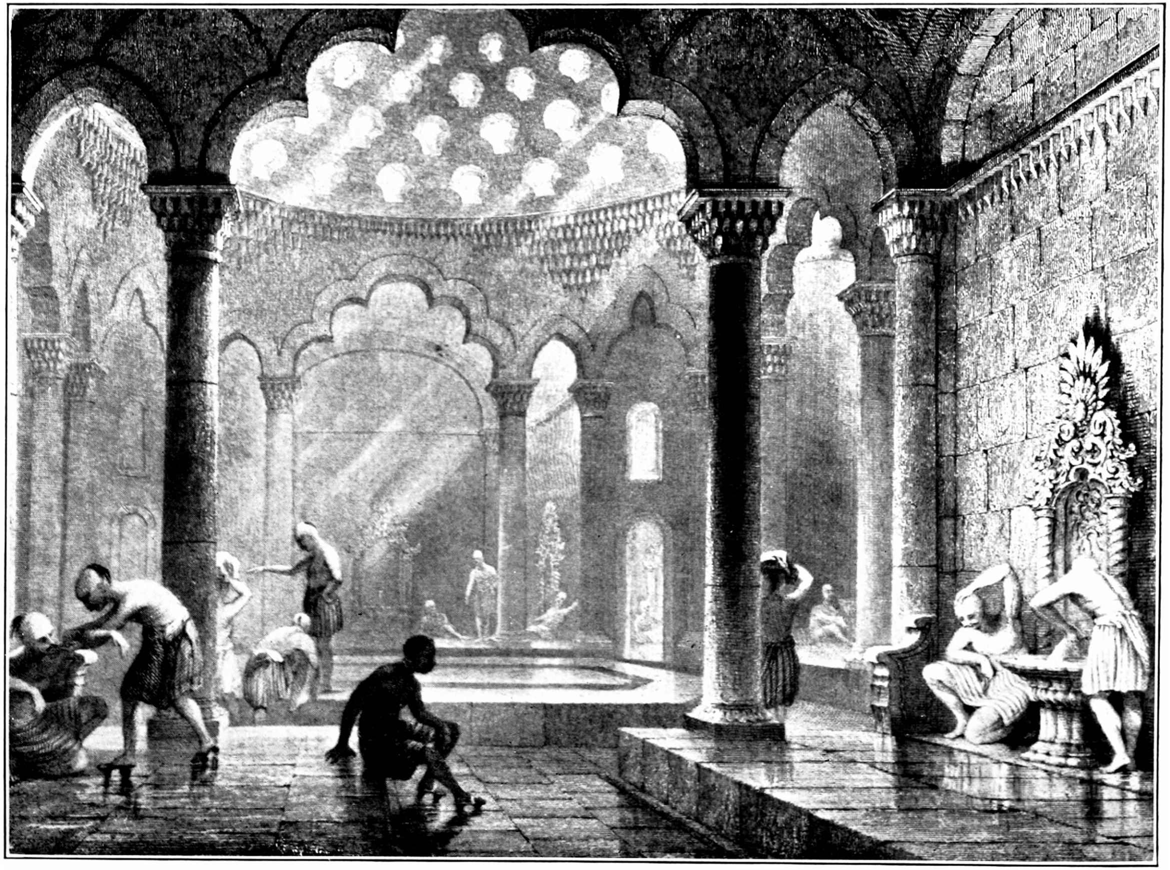
the attendant was resourceful: he immediately laid the hadji on his back, and, having caught about a dozen of the fleet cockroaches, he made them into a paste, and applied the paste, still hot, to the hadji's knee. The pain was alleviated almost miraculously, and the hadji's gratitude was boundless.

Mingled with self-reproach for having dared to question the utility of any creature made by the All-Wise, his remorse grew as the days passed, and he pondered on some penance that might please his Creator and teach himself man's utter insignificance.

Shortly after this painful adventure, and as soon as he could walk, he left Damascus for Beirout, and took steamer for Batoum.

In the Black Sea a dreadful storm was raging, and even the seamen despaired of ever reaching a port. In every part of the vessel, nay, even on the captain's bridge, there was weeping and wailing, but the hadji took no note of this uproar or of the tempest which caused it; he calmly smoked and contemplated the wondrous works of the Almighty. His calmness finally irritated his fellow-passengers and the seamen to such an extent that they said to him: "O hadji! you have been lately at the tomb of the Prophet. Do you think it meet, then, that you should be now sitting smoking, indifferent to our common danger, instead of joining with us in asking for mercy?"

"Friends," said the hadji in reply, "who has caused this storm? Is it not Allah? Take warning, therefore, from me, and don't criticize the work of Allah! I once did so, O brethren, and I still limp from the pain of the chastisement which He inflicted on me. With His help I shall never again question the Supreme Wisdom, and, my friends, if you take my advice, you will follow my example and be resigned, as I am, to His holy will."



THE BATH

To face page 211

Then he continued to smoke and to contemplate, while the storm raged. And he thought of the ten signs which shall precede the Last Day, that is to say, the smoke, the beast of the earth, an eclipse in the east, another in the west, and a third in the peninsula of Arabia, the appearance of Antichrist, the sun's rising in the west, the eruption of Gog and Magog, the descent of Jesus on earth, and fire which shall break forth from Aden. And he considered within himself how on that day the beasts of the field shall also rise from the dead, and how the unhorned beasts shall take revenge on the horned. And he marvelled exceedingly.

THE FORTY WISE MEN

ON a day amongst the many days when the Turk was more earnest than now, before the Europeans came and gave new ideas to our children, there lived and laboured for the welfare of the people an organized body of men. At whose suggestion this society was formed I know not. All that we know of them to-day, through our fathers, is that their forefathers chose from among them the most wise, sincere, and experienced forty brethren. These forty were named the Forty Wise Men. When one of the forty was called away from his labours here, perhaps to continue them in higher spheres or to receive his reward—who knows ?—the remaining thirty-nine consulted, and chose from the community him whom they thought most capable and worthy of guiding and of being guided, to add to their number. They lived and held their meetings in a mosque of which little remains now, the destructive hand of time having left but a battered dome and three cheerless walls pierced by great square holes where there once were iron bars and stained glass. As a place of worship the mosque is no more—as the forty wise men are no more. But its foundations are solid, and they may in time come to support an edifice dedicated to noble work, and, In-shâ-Allah ! the seed of the Forty Wise Men may also bear fruit in the days that are not yet.

What good, you will ask, did these forty wise men do ? Much good, very much good, my friends. Not only did they administer justice to the oppressed, and give to the needy



SCUTARI AND THE MAIDEN TOWER, ON THE BOSPHORUS

To face page 212

substantial aid ; but their very existence had the most beneficial effect on the community. Why ? you ask. Because each vied with the other to be worthy of nomination for the vacancy when it occurred. No profession was excluded. No station in life was too low for admittance, no station in life was so high that one of the Faithful who occupied it might not also become one of the "Forty." And, among the forty, all were equal. With their years, their wisdom grew ; and they were blessed by Allah.

In the town of Scutari, on the other side of the Bosphorus, there lived and laboured a Dervish. He was a just man, charitable to the poor, merciful and compassionate. Apparently his sole object in life was to become one of the Forty Wise Men who presided over the people and protected them from all ills.

The years went on, and, still without a reward, the Dervish patiently laboured. No doubt he contented himself with the hope that the merit of his prayers, his good works, and his life would one day be recognized here below by Allah. If he did so solace himself, my friends, he made a mistake ; for true faith expecteth nothing, and perfect love desireth no reward. The day did come, however, and the Dervish's great life-long desire had every appearance of being realized. One of the Forty Wise Men, having accomplished his mission on earth, departed this life. The remaining thirty-nine consulted as to whom they should call in to aid them in their work. More than one of them proposed the election of the Dervish. They pointed out how he had laboured among the people in Scutari, ever ready to help the needy, ever willing to advise the rash, always quick to comfort and encourage the despairing. It was unanimously decided that he should be nominated. A deputation consisting of three, two to listen, one to speak, was at once named ; and, with the blessing of their brethren for

success, they entered a caïque and were rowed over to Scutari. Arriving at the Dervish's gate, the spokesman said, "*Selámin aleikum!*" ("Peace be on you!") and when the other responded, "*Ve aleikum selám!*" ("And on you be peace!") the visitor thus addressed the Dervish:

"Brother in the spirit, thy actions have been noted, and we come to make to thee a proposal which, after consideration, thou wilt either accept or reject as thou thinkest best. We would ask thee to become one of us. We are sent hither by the sages who preside over the people. Brother, we number in all one hundred and thirty-eight in spirit. Ninety-nine, having accomplished their task in the flesh, have departed. Thirty-nine, still in the flesh, endeavour to fulfil their duty. And it is the desire of these one hundred and thirty-eight souls to add to us thyself, in order to complete our number of labourers in the flesh. Brother, thy duties, which will be everlasting, thou wilt learn when with us. Do thou consider, and we shall return at the setting of the sun on the third day in order to receive thy answer."

So saying, they prepared to depart. But the Dervish stopped them, saying: "Brothers, I have no need to consider the subject for three days, seeing that my inmost desire and my sole object in life for thirty years has been to become one of you. In spirit I have long been your brother. To become your brother in the flesh will therefore be easy for me."

Then answered the spokesman: "Brother, thou hast spoken well. Allah! thou art with us in our choice; we praise thee. Brother, one word! Our ways are different from the ways of all other men. Thou hast but to have faith, and all will be well."

"Brethren, faith! I have always had faith; my faith is now even strengthened. I do your bidding."

"Brother, first of all thy worldly goods must be disposed

of and turned into gold. Every earthly possession thou hast must be represented by a piece of gold. Therefore see to it that this be done. As for us, we have other duties to fulfil; but will return ere the sun sets in the west."

The Dervish set about selling all his goods; and when the lengthened shadows and the deep colouring of the sky in the west harbingered the closing of the day, he had disposed of everything, and stood waiting with naught but a sack of gold.

The three wise men returned, and, on seeing the Dervish, said: "Brother, thou hast done well; we will hence."

A caïque was in waiting, and the four entered. Silently the caïque glided over the smooth surface of the Bosphorus; and silently the occupants sat. When beyond the Maidens' Tower, the spokesman, turning to the Dervish, said: "Brother, give me that sack, representing everything thou dost possess in this world."

The Dervish handed the sack as he was bidden, and the wise man solemnly rose, and, holding it on high, said: "With the blessing of our brother Mustapha." Thereupon he dropped it into a part of the stream where the current is strongest. Then, sitting down, he relapsed into silence. The deed was done; and nothing outward told the story. The caïqueji dipped his oars, and the waves rippled as softly as before. Nothing broke the stillness but the distant, soothing cry of the muezzin, calling the faithful to prayer. That musical cry now waxed, now waned, now completely died away, according as the muezzins moved around the narrow and lofty platforms of their respective minarets.

Ere long the boat reached the shore; the four men wended their way up the steep hill; and the horizon, wrapped in the mantle of night, hid them from the boatman's sight. A few minutes' walk brought them to the mosque of the Forty Wise Men; and, on reaching the door-

way, the spokesman turned to the Dervish and said: "Brother, follow faithfully," passing immediately afterwards through the doorway. They entered a large, vaulted chamber, the ceiling of which was artistically inlaid with mosaïcs, and the floor covered with tiles whose brilliant colours spoke of the lost ceramic art of bygone ages. From the centre of the ceiling hung a large chandelier holding a number of little oil cups, each adding its tiny light to the general fund as if to show that union is strength. Round this chandelier were seven brass filigreed, hemispherical lanterns, each holding several oil-burners. These many burners produced a soothing but not a powerful illumination, and this "dim religious light" combined with the silence to add greatly to the impressiveness of the sacred place. Round the hall were forty boxes, all the same shape and size.

The neophyte stood in the centre of the hall and, under the influence of the strange scene, he was almost afraid to breathe. He did not quite know whether to be happy or afraid at having come so far.

As he stood thus, immersed in thought, one of the many curtains which were hung around the walls was slowly raised, and there came forth from behind it a very old man, his venerable white beard all but touching his girdle.

Slowly and solemnly he walked over to the opposite side of the mosque, and in his train came thirty-eight other aged men, the last being apparently the youngest.

The newcomer watched these aged and mysterious men moving about in the unbroken silence, opening their lips as if talking to invisible beings; now embracing unseen forms, now clasping invisible hands, now bidding farewell to beings which the visitor could not see.

The Dervish closed his eyes and opened them again. Was he dreaming? No, it was no dream, no hallucination.

A sense of horror and of awe invaded his whole being, and the perspiration poured down his face.

Each of the brethren now took his place beside one of the forty boxes. There was only one vacancy; no one stood at the side of the box to the left of the youngest brother. Making a profound salaam, which all answered, the old man silently turned, raised the curtain, and passed into the darkness, each in his order following. As one in a trance, the Dervish watched one after another disappear. The last now raised the curtain, but before vanishing, he turned (it was the spokesman who had come over to Scutari) and whispering the three words: "Brother! . . . Faith! . . . Follow!" he stepped into the darkness.

These words acted upon the Dervish like a spell; he followed also.

Up, up the winding stairway of a minaret they went. As last they reached the dizzy stone platform near the top, and a fresh, salt wind from the Black Sea blew refreshingly on the visitor's fevered brow. Then horror seized on the Dervish, for what did he see? He saw one, two, three of the old men disappear over the parapet. Finally came the turn of his friend the spokesman. With the words, "Brother! Have faith! Follow!" he also vanished into the inky darkness.

Again, at the eleventh hour did the cheering words of the brother spokesman act upon the Dervish like magic. He raised his foot to the parapet, and jumped up on it two or three times. But man's angel guardian does not carry him over the rugged paths of life. The guardian only gives the impulse; it is for the man himself to act. So it was in the case of the Dervish. He jumped once, twice, thrice, but each time fell backwards instead of forwards. Then he hesitated again and looked down with horror at the sheer wall of the minaret and at the city lights twinkling at an incredible distance below

him. Sweat burst out all over his body. A cold chill ran down his spine. His head drooped. He got off the parapet. He was not equal to the test. With a great weight on his heart, he slowly descended the winding stairs of the minaret. He had reached his zenith only in desire, and was now on his decline.

Lamenting, like the weak mortal that he was, at not having followed, he again entered the hall he had just left, with the intention, no doubt, of departing altogether from the mosque.

But the charm of the place was on him again, and, as he stood in the centre of that sacred and mysterious building, a curtain moved, and the eldest of the old men advanced. As before, the silence was unbroken. Again did each take his place beside a box, again did the old man salaam, again did all the others respond simultaneously. Again did they move their lips and their arms as if talking to invisible beings. But now they seemed to be talking of some calamity which had befallen them and which they all regretted.

The old man went and opened the box that stood alone. From this he took, what? the identical bag of gold that had been dropped into the Bosphorus some hours before! The spokesman then came forward and took the bag from the hands of the old man. The brain of the unfortunate Dervish was now in a whirl. A multitude of unseen presences seemed to be reproaching him with fingers which had no substance, with voices which had no sound.

Mournfully, the spokesman thus addressed the spell-bound Dervish, his voice producing a strange echo in the vaulted mosque, as if his words were being repeated and emphasized by a hundred invisible mouths:—

"Friend and brother in the spirit, but weak in the flesh, thou hast proved thyself unworthy, alas! to impart that which

thou hast not thyself—Faith! Thine actions hitherto, seemingly meritorious, have not been intended solely for the eye of the Almighty, the All-seeing, the All-powerful. They have been partly, alas! for the approbation of mankind. To get this approbation thou hast soared out of thine element; but the atmosphere is too rarefied; thou canst not live in it; thou must, therefore, alas, return!

"Get thee back into the world, back to thy brothers; thou canst not be one of us. One hundred and thirty-nine in the spirit have regretfully judged thee as lacking in faith. They have concluded that, not having a sheltered apartment within thyself, thou canst not shelter others. No man can bequeath that which he hath not. Go thy way, and in secret build thee a wall, brick by brick, action by action. Let none see the place but the eye that seeth all, lest the wall tumble down, when it is all but completed, and thou art again exposed to the four winds of heaven. Take thy money, thine all! *Allaha Esmarladeq!* Farewell!"

And with this the Dervish was led out into the street, a lone and defeated man. And in his hand he had his all—the bag of gold.

HOW THE KHOJA SAVED ALLAH

NOT far from the famous fountain and street and tombs in Eyoub an old khoja kept a school, and very skilfully he taught the rising generation the everlasting lesson from the Book of Books. Such knowledge had he of human nature that by a glance at his pupil he could at once tell how long it would take him to learn a chapter, a quarter, the half or the whole of the Koran. His ear was so trained that it mattered not what chapter the boys were reciting, and whether or not each group of three or four boys was reciting a different part, he could detect at once a misplaced accent and correct it while the other boys continued to recite their lessons. He was known over the whole empire as the best reciter and most accurate imparter of the sacred writings of the Prophet. For many years this khoja, famed far and wide as "the khoja of khojas," had taught in this little school. The number of times he had recited the Book with his pupils is beyond counting; and should we attempt to consider how often he must have corrected them for some misplaced word our beards would grow grey in the endeavour.

Swaying to and fro one day as fast as his old age would let him, and reciting to his pupils the latter part of one of the chapters, Bakara, divine inspiration opened his inward eye and led him to pause at the following sentence: "And he that spends his money in the ways of Allah is likened unto a grain of wheat that brings forth seven sheaves, and in each sheaf

a hundred grains; and Allah giveth twofold unto whom He pleaseth." As his pupils, one after the other, recited this verse to him, he wondered why he had overlooked its meaning for so many years. Fully convinced that anything either given to Allah, or in the way that He proposes, was an investment that brought a percentage undreamed of in known commerce, he dismissed his pupils, and putting his hand into his bosom drew forth from the many folds of his dress a bag, and proceeded to count his worldly possessions.

Carefully and attentively he counted and then recounted his money, and found that if invested in the ways of Allah it would bring a return of no less than one thousand piastres.

"Think of it," said the khoja to himself, "one thousand piastres! One thousand piastres! *Mâshâ'llâh!* a fortune."

So, having dismissed his school, he sallied forth, his bag of money in his hand, and began distributing its contents to the needy that he met in the highways. Ere many hours had passed the whole of his savings was gone. The khoja was very happy; for now he was the creditor in Allah's books for one thousand piastres.

He returned to his house and ate his evening meal of bread and olives, and was content.

The next day came. The thousand piastres had not yet arrived. He ate his bread, he imagined he had olives, and was content.

The third day came. The old khoja had no bread and he had no olives. He suffered the pangs of hunger. So when the end of the day had come, and his pupils had departed to their homes, the khoja with a full heart and an empty stomach walked out of the town and soon got beyond the city walls.

There, where no one could hear him, he lamented his sad fate and the great calamity that had befallen him in his old age.

What sin had he committed? What great wrong had his ancestors done that the wrath of the Almighty had thus fallen on him when his earthly course was well-nigh run.

"Ya! Allah! Allah!" he cried, and beat his breast.

As if in answer to his cry the howl of the dreaded Fakir Dervish came over across the plain. In those days the Fakir Dervish was a terror in the land. He knocked at the door, and it was opened. He asked and received food. If refused, life often paid the penalty.

The khoja's lamentations were now greater than ever; for should the Dervish ask him for food and the khoja have nothing to give, he would certainly be killed.

"Allah! Allah! Allah! Guide me now. Protect one of your faithful followers," cried the frightened khoja, and he looked around to see if there was anyone to rescue him from his perilous position. But not a soul was to be seen, and the walls of the city were five miles distant. Just then the howl of the Dervish again reached his ear, and in terror he flew he knew not whither. As luck would have it he came upon a tree, up which, although stiff from age and weak from want, the khoja with wonderful agility scrambled, and, trembling like a leaf, awaited his fate.

Nearer and nearer came the howling Dervish, till at last his long hair could be seen floating in the air, as with rapid strides he preceded the wind upon his endless journey.

On and on he came, his wild yell sending the blood from very fear out of the poor khoja's face, and leaving it as yellow as a melon.

To his utter dismay the khoja saw the Dervish approach the tree and sit down under its shade.

Sighing deeply, the Dervish said in a loud voice: "Why have I come into this world? Why were my forefathers born? Why was anybody born? Oh, Allah! Oh, Allah! What



EYOUB SULTAN, FOUNTAIN AND STREET OF THE TOMBS

To face page 222

have you done! Misery! Misery! Nothing but misery to mankind and everything living. Shall I not be avenged for all the misery my father and my father's fathers have suffered. I shall be avenged."

Striking his chest a loud blow, as if to emphasize the decision he had come to, the Dervish took a small bag that lay by his side, and slowly proceeded to untie the leather strings that bound it. Bringing forth from it a small image he gazed at it a moment and then addressed it in the following terms:

"You, Job! you bore much; you have written a book in which your history is recorded; you have earned the reputation of being the most patient man that ever lived. Yet I have read your history, and found that when real affliction oppressed you, you cursed God. You have made men believe, too, that there is a reward in this life for all the afflictions they suffer. You have misled mankind. For these sins no one has ever punished you. Now I will punish you," and taking his long, curved sword in his hand he cut off the head of the figure.

The Dervish bent forward, took another image and, gazing upon it with a contemptuous smile, thus addressed it:

"David, David, singer of songs of peace in this world and in the world to come, I have read your sayings in which you counsel men to lead a righteous life for the sake of the reward which they are to receive. I have learned that you have misled your fellow mortals with your songs of peace and joy. I have read your history, and I find that you have committed many sins. For these sins and for misleading your fellow men you have never been punished. Now I will punish you," and taking his sword in his hand he cut off David's head.

Again the Dervish bent forward and brought forth an image which he addressed as follows:

"You, Solomon, are reputed to have been the wisest man that ever lived. You had command over the host of the Genii and could control the legion of the demons. They came at the bidding of your signet ring, and they trembled at the mysterious names known only to you. You understood every living thing. The speech of the beasts of the field, of the birds of the air, of the insects of the earth, and of the fishes of the sea, was known unto you. Yet when I read your history I found that, in spite of the vast knowledge that was vouchsafed unto you, you committed many wrongs and did many foolish things, which in the end brought misery into the world and destruction unto your people; and for all these no one has ever punished you. Now I will punish you," and taking his sword he cut off Solomon's head.

Again the Dervish bent forward and brought forth from the bag another figure, which he addressed thus:

"Jesus, Jesus, prophet of God, you came into this world to atone, by your blood, for the sins of mankind, and to bring unto them a religion of peace. You founded a church, whose history I have studied, and I see that it sets fathers against their children and brethren against one another; that it brought strife into the world; that the lives of men and women and children were sacrificed so that the rivers ran red with blood unto the seas. Truly you were a great prophet, but the misery you caused must be avenged. For it no one has yet punished you. Now I will punish you," and he took his sword and cut off Jesus's head.

With a sorrowful face the Dervish bent forward and brought forth another image from the bag.

"Mohammed," he said, "I have slain Job, David, Solomon, and Jesus. What shall I do with you? After the followers of Jesus had shed much blood, their religion spread over the world, was acceptable unto man, and the nations were at

peace. Then you came into the world, and you brought a new religion, and father rose against father, and brother rose against brother; hatred was sown between your followers and the followers of Jesus, and again the rivers ran red with blood unto the seas; and you have not been punished. For this I will punish you. *Wallahi!* By the beard of my forefathers, whose blood was made to flow in your cause, you too must die," and with a blow the head of Mohammed fell to the ground.

Then the Dervish prostrated himself to the earth, and after a silent prayer rose and brought forth from the bag the last figure. Reverently he bowed to it, and then he addressed it as follows:

"Oh, Allah! The Allah of Allahs. There is but one Allah, and thou art He. I have slain Job, David, Solomon, Jesus, and Mohammed for the folly that they have brought into the world. Thou, God, art all-powerful. All men are thy children, thou createst them and bringest them into the world. The thoughts that they think are thy thoughts. If all these men have brought all this evil into the world, it is thy fault. Shall I punish them, and allow thee to go unhurt? No. I must punish thee also;" and he raised his sword to strike.

As the sword circled in the air the khoja, secreted in the tree, forgot the fear in which he stood of the Dervish. In the excitement of the moment he cried out in a loud tone of voice: "Stop! Stop! He owes me one thousand piastres."

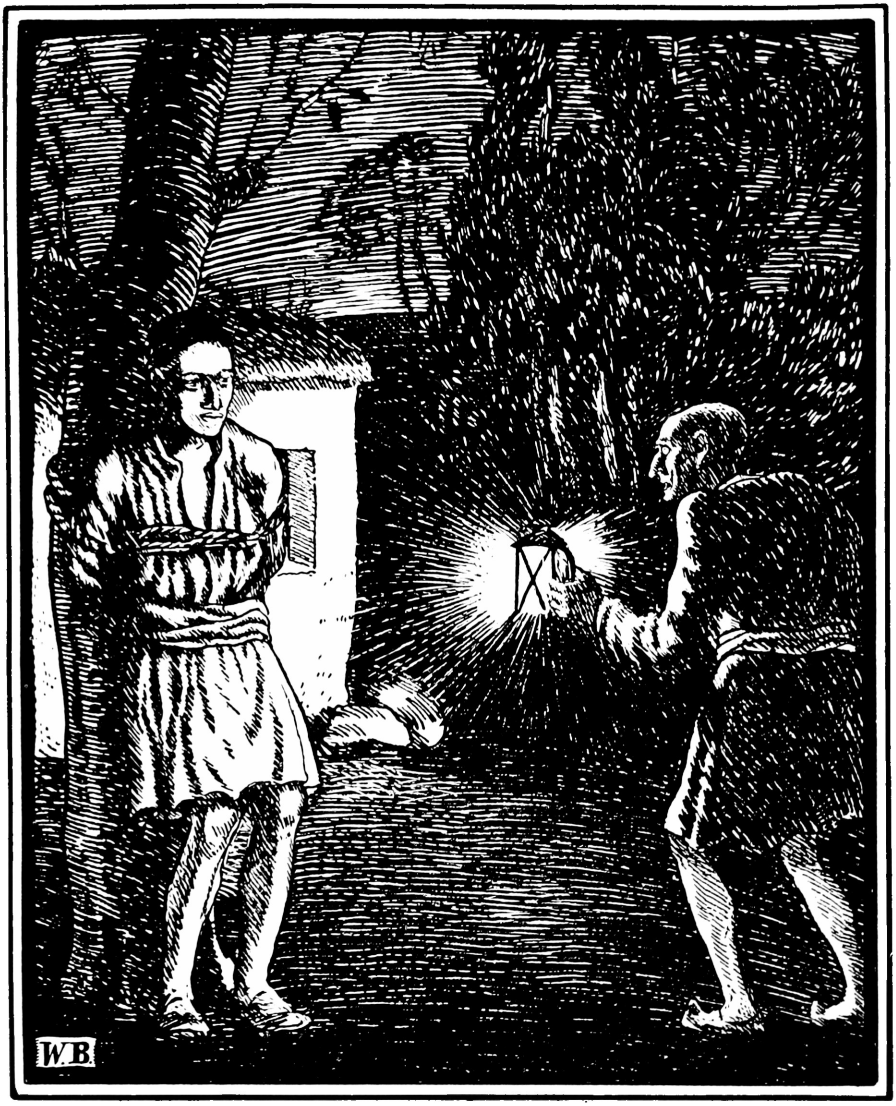
On hearing this mysterious voice from above, the Dervish reeled and fell senseless to the ground. The khoja was sorry that he spoke and trembled with fear, convinced that his last hour had arrived. The Dervish lay stretched upon his back on the grass like one dead. At last the khoja took courage. Breaking a twig from off the tree, he threw it down upon the Dervish's face, but the monk made no sign. The khoja

becoming still more courageous, removed one of his heavy outer shoes and threw it on the outstretched figure of the Dervish, but still the latter lay motionless. Then the khoja carefully climbed down the tree, gave the body of the Dervish a kick, and climbed up again, but still the Dervish did not stir. At length the khoja descended from the tree and placed his ear to the Dervish's heart. It did not beat. The Dervish was dead.

"Ah, well," said the khoja, "at least I shall not starve. I will take his garments and sell them and buy me some bread."

The khoja commenced to remove the Dervish's garments. As he took off his belt he found that it was heavy. He opened it, and saw that it contained gold. He counted the gold and found that it was exactly one thousand piastres.

The khoja turned his face toward Mecca and, raising his eyes to heaven, said: "Oh, Allah, you have kept your promise, but," he added, with just a slight touch of patronage in his tone, "not before I had saved your life."



"QUICK! QUICK! BEADLE, LOOK AT MY BACK AND SEE IF IT HAS GONE!"

To face page 227

HOW CHAPKIN HALID BECAME CHIEF DETECTIVE *

IN Balata there lived, some years ago, two scapegraces called Chapkin Halid and Pitch Osman. Those two young rascals lived by their wits and at the expense of their neighbours. But they often had to lament the ever-increasing difficulties they encountered in procuring the few piastres they needed daily for bread and the coffee-house. They had tried several schemes in their own neighbourhood, with exceptionally poor results, and were almost disheartened when Chapkin Halid conceived an idea that seemed to offer them every chance of success. He explained to his friend Osman that Balata was "played out," at least for a time, and that they must go elsewhere to satisfy their needs. Halid's plan was to go to Stamboul, and feign death in the principal street, while Osman was to collect the funeral expenses from the shocked and sympathetic onlookers.

Arriving in Stamboul, Halid stretched himself on his back on the pavement and covered his face with an old sack, while Osman sat himself down beside the supposed corpse, and every now and then bewailed the hard fate of the stranger who had met with death on the first day of his arrival. The corpse prompted Osman whenever the coast was clear, and the touching tale told by Osman soon brought contributions for

* The Turkish title of this tale is, "Chapkin Halid and Pitch Osman," which means "Scamp Halid and Bastard Osman."

the burial of the stranger. Osman had collected about thirty piastres, and Halid was seriously thinking of a resurrection, when the approach of a procession made it necessary for him to remain dead for some time longer. The procession was the suite of the Grand Vizier, who, catching sight of Halid, inquired why the man lay on the ground in that fashion. Being told that the body was that of a stranger who had died in the street, the Grand Vizier gave instructions to an imam, who happened to be at hand, to bury the unknown and to come afterwards for the funeral expenses to the Sublime Porte.

Halid was reverently carried off to the mosque, and Osman thought that it was time to leave the corpse to take care of itself. The imam laid Halid on the marble floor and prepared to wash him prior to interment. He had taken off his turban and long cloak and got ready the water, when he remembered that he had no soap, and immediately went out to purchase some. No sooner had the imam disappeared than Halid jumped up, and, donning the imam's turban and long cloak, repaired to the Sublime Porte. Here he asked for admittance to the presence of the Grand Vizier, but he was told that this request could not be granted until he had told the nature of his business. Halid said he was the imam who, in compliance with the verbal instructions received from his Highness, had buried a stranger, and that he had now come for the payment which had been promised to him. The Grand Vizier sent five gold-pieces (one hundred piastres) to the supposed imam, and Halid made off as fast as possible.

No sooner had Halid departed than the imam arrived without his cloak and in breathless haste. He explained that he was the imam who had received instructions from the Grand Vizier to bury a stranger, but that the supposed corpse had disappeared, and so had his own cloak and turban. Witnesses having proved this man to be undoubtedly the



Daily Mirror

VIEW OF CONSTANTINOPLE FROM A WINDOW OF THE OLD GALATA TOWER

To face page 228

imam of the quarter, the Grand Vizier gave orders to his chief detective to capture, within three days, on pain of death, and bring to the Sublime Porte, this fearless evil-doer.

The chief detective was soon on the track of Halid; but the latter was on the look-out. With the aid of the money he had received from the Grand Vizier to defray his burial expenses, he successfully evaded the clutches of the chief detective, who was very angry at being thus frustrated. On the second day the detective again got on the scent of Halid, and determined to follow him till an opportunity offered for his capture. Halid knew that he was being followed, and, of course, he divined the intentions of his pursuer. As he was passing a pharmacy he noticed there several young men, so he entered and spoke to the Hebrew druggist in Indo-Spanish, a language with which he was perfectly conversant. Handing the druggist one of the gold pieces he had received from the Grand Vizier, he said that his uncle, who would come in presently, was not right, alas! in his mind, but that, if the druggist could manage to douche his head and back with cold water, he would regain his health for a week or two. No sooner did the chief detective enter the shop than, at a word from the apothecary, the young men seized him, and, by means of a large squirt, did their utmost to give him the salutary and cooling douche which his affectionate nephew had recommended. The more the detective protested, the more the apothecary soothingly explained that the douche would soon be over, and that he, the uncle, would feel much better after it. The shopkeeper also told of numerous similar cases which he had cured in a like manner. The detective saw that it was useless to struggle, so he abandoned himself to the treatment; and in the meantime Halid made off. The chief detective was so disheartened by this experience that he went to the Grand Vizier and begged for instant decapitation,

as death (said he) was preferable to the annoyance he had received and might still receive at the hands of Chapkin Halid. The Grand Vizier was both furious and amused, so he spared the chief detective, and gave orders that guards should be placed at the twenty-four gates of the city, and that Halid should be seized at the first opportunity. A reward was further promised to the person who would bring him to the Sublime Porte. Meanwhile, however, Halid lived quietly in the old Tower of Galata.

Halid was finally caught one night as he was going out of the Top-Kapou (Cannon Gate). He had gone into the great subterranean palace of Yèrè-Batan-Seraï and traversed a secret passage which would bring him, he thought, outside the walls of the city. But it brought him into a pile of ruins close by a guard-house, the soldiers of which took him at first for the devil. But having recognized him, after a while, they rejoiced in their capture, and also in the prospect of now getting a little rest after their vigilant watch. As a result of considerable discussion, they decided to bind their prisoner to a large tree close to the guard-house. By doing so they would avoid the loss of sleep and the anxiety incident to watching over so desperate a character. They carried their scheme into execution, and Halid now thought that his case was indeed hopeless. Towards dawn, however, he perceived a man with a lantern walking toward the Armenian church, and rightly concluded that it was the beadle going to make ready for the early morning service. So he called out in a loud voice :

"Beadle ! Brother ! Beadle ! Brother ! come here quickly ! "

Now it happened that the beadle was a poor hunchback, and no sooner did Halid perceive this than he said :

"Quick, quick, beadle ! look at my back and see if it has gone ! "

"See if what has gone?" asked the beadle, carefully looking behind the tree.

"Why, my hump, of course," answered Halid.

The beadle made a close inspection, and declared that he could see no hump.

"A thousand thanks!" fervently exclaimed Halid; "then please undo the rope."

The beadle set about the work of liberating Halid, earnestly begging him at the same time to tell how he had got rid of his hump, so that he, the beadle, might also free himself of his deformity. Halid agreed to tell his rescuer the cure, provided that he had not yet broken his fast, and provided also that he was prepared to pay a certain small sum of money for the secret. The beadle satisfied Halid on both of these points, whereupon Halid immediately proceeded to bind the hunchback to the tree, telling him meanwhile to repeat sixty-one times the words: "Esserti! Pesserti! Sersepeti!" If he did this, the hump would of a certainty disappear. Halid left the poor beadle earnestly and religiously repeating those nonsensical words.

The guards were very much surprised when they found tied to the tree, not Halid, but a stranger, who took no notice of them and continued to repeat very rapidly words which they could not understand.

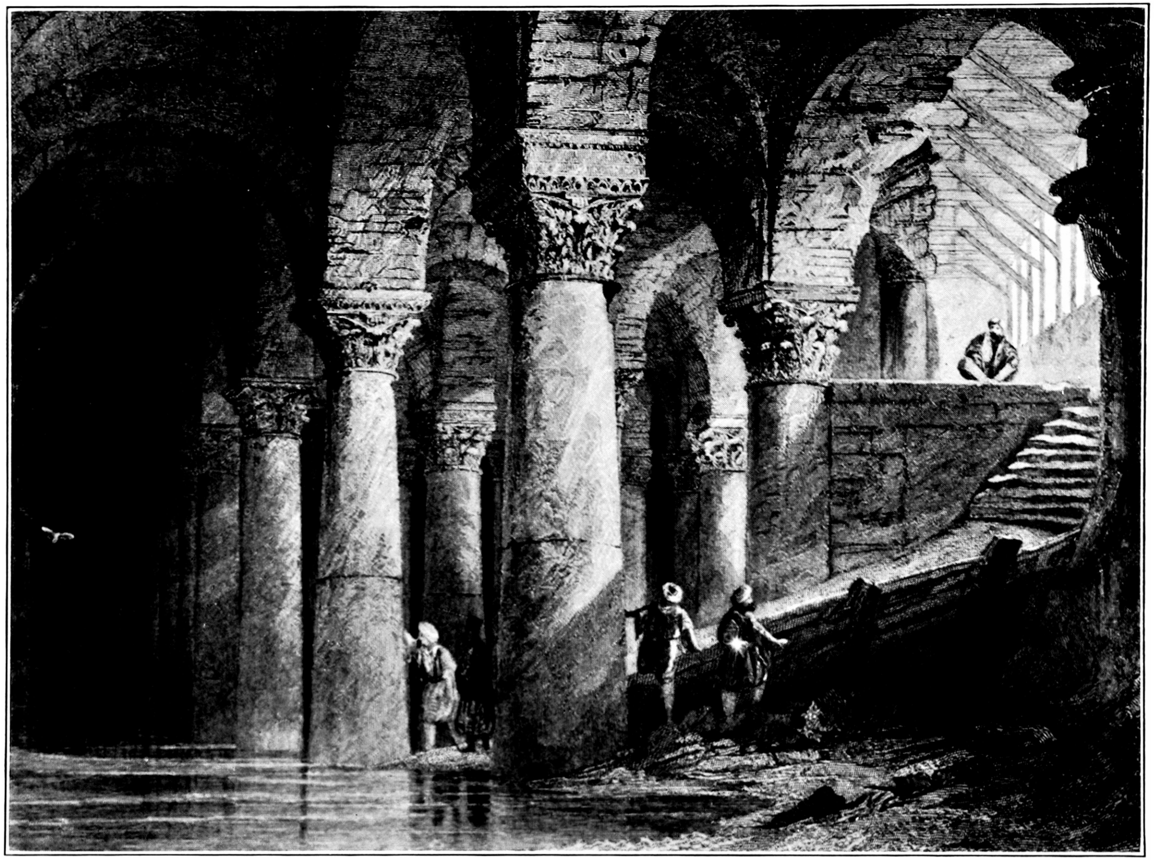
"Who is this hunchback and what is he saying?" asked a soldier. "He is mad. He is talking nonsense."

"Therefore it is," quoth the *bimbashi* (major), who was a very holy man, having been on the *hajj*,* "therefore it is that he may be a prophet. Is it not the same in the Koran? Does not the sura 'Al Arof' begin with four letters whose meaning is known neither to men nor to angels, but only to Allah alone?"

But soon the Armenian priest came on the scene, and,

* That is, "On the Pilgrimage to Mecca."

recognizing the beadle, begged the soldiers to liberate him. The soldiers were furious as they began to unbind the captive, and what made them the more furious was the fact that the only answer they could get to their host of questions was "Esserti, Pesserti, Sersepeti!" As the knots were loosened the despairing voice of the beadle rose louder and louder as he called out the charmed words in the hope of arresting the undoing of his bonds. No sooner was the beadle freed than he asked Allah to bring down calamity on the destroyers of the charm that was to remove his hump. On hearing the beadle's tale, the guards understood how their prisoner had secured his liberty, and sent word to the chief detective. This gentleman then repaired once more to the Grand Vizier and, having prostrated himself at the feet of that dignitary, told this latest instance of the notorious Chapkin's cunning. The Grand Vizier was amused and also very anxious to see this Chapkin Halid, so he sent criers all over the city, announcing the grant of a full pardon to Halid on condition that he would come to the Sublime Porte and confess in person to the Grand Vizier. Halid obeyed the summons, and came to kiss the hem of the Grand Vizier's garment, and his Excellency was so favourably impressed by him that he there and then appointed him to be his chief detective.



YÈRÈ-BATAN-SERAI, CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page 232

STORIES ABOUT SCRIBES

STORIES ABOUT SCRIBES

BETTER WOMAN'S FOLLY THAN MAN'S WISDOM

THERE lived once in Constantinople an old khoja, a learned man, who had a son. The boy followed in his father's footsteps, went every day to the mosque Aya Sofia, seated himself in a secluded spot, to the left of the pillar bearing the impress of the Conqueror's hand, and engaged in the study of the Koran. Daily he might be seen seated, swaying his body to and fro, and reciting to himself the verses of the Holy Book.

The dearest wish of a Mohammedan theological student is to be able to recite the entire Koran by heart. Many years are spent in memorizing the Holy Book, which must be recited with a prescribed cantillation, and in acquiring a rhythmical movement of the body which accompanies the chant.

When Abdul, for that was the young man's name, had reached his nineteenth year, he had, by the most assiduous study, finally succeeded in mastering three-fourths of the Koran. At this achievement his pride rose, his ambition was fired, and he determined to become a great man.

The day that he reached this decision, he did not go to the Mosque, but stopped at home, in his father's house, and sat staring at the fire glowing in the brazier. Several times the father asked :

" My son, what do you see in the fire ? "

And each time the son answered :

" Nothing, father."

He was very young ; he could not see.

Finally, the young man picked up courage and gave expression to his thoughts.

" Father," he said, " I wish to become a great man."

" That is very easy," said the father.

" And to be a great man," continued the son, " I must first go to Mecca." For no Mohammedan priest or theologian, or even layman, has fulfilled all of the cardinal precepts of his faith unless he has made the pilgrimage to the Holy City.

To his son's last observation the father blandly replied : " It is very easy to go to Mecca."

" How ?—easy ? " asked the son. " On the contrary, it is very difficult ; for the journey is costly, and I have no money."

" Listen, my son," said the father. " You must become a scribe, the writer of the thoughts of your brethren, and your fortune is made."

" But I have not even the implements necessary for a scribe," said the son.

" All that can be easily arranged," said the father ; " your grandfather had an ink-horn ; I will give it you ; I will buy you some writing-paper, and we will get you a box to sit in. All that you need to do is to sit still, look wise, and your fortune is made."

And indeed the advice was good. For letter-writing is an art which only few possess. The ability to write by no means carries with it the ability to compose. Epistolary genius is rare.

Abdul was much rejoiced at the plan that had been given him, and lost no time in carrying it out. He took his grandfather's ink-horn and the paper his father bought, he got himself a box, and began his career as a scribe.

Abdul was a child, he knew nothing, but, deeming himself wise, he sought to surpass the counsel of his father.

"To look wise," he said, "is not sufficient; I must have some other attraction."

And after much thought he hit upon the following idea. Over his box he painted a legend: "The wisdom of man is greater than the wisdom of woman." People thought the sign very clever, customers came, the young khoja took in many piastres, and he was correspondingly happy.

This sign one day attracted the eyes and mind of a Hanoum (Turkish lady). Seeing that Abdul was a manly youth, she went to him and said:

"Khoja, I have a difficult letter to write. I have heard that thou art very wise, so I have come to thee. To write the letter thou wilt need all thy wit. Moreover, the letter is a long one, and I cannot stand here while it is being written. Come to my konak (house) at three this afternoon, and we will write the letter."

The khoja was overcome with admiration for his fair client, and surprised at the invitation. He was enchanted, his heart beat wildly, and so great was his agitation that his reply of acquiescence was scarcely audible.

The invitation had more than the charm of novelty to make it attractive. Abdul had never talked with a woman outside of his own family circle. To be admitted to a lady's house was in itself an adventure.

Long before the appointed time, the young khoja—impetuous youth!—gathered together his reeds, ink and sand. With feverish step he made his way to the house. Lattices covered the windows, a high wall surrounded the garden, and a ponderous gate barred the entrance. Thrice he raised the massive knocker.

"Who is there?" called a voice from within.

"The scribe," was the reply.

"It is well," said the porter: the gate was unbarred, and the khoja permitted to enter. He was at once ushered into the apartment of his fair client.

The lady welcomed him cordially.

"Ah! Khoja Effendi, I am glad to see you; pray sit down."

The khoja nervously pulled out his writing implements.

"Do not be in such a hurry," said the lady. "Refresh yourself; take a cup of coffee, smoke a cigarette, and we will write the letter afterwards."

So he lit a cigarette, drank a cup of coffee, and they fell to talking. Time flew; the minutes seemed like seconds, and the hours were as minutes. While they were thus enjoying themselves there suddenly came a heavy knock at the gate.

"It is my husband, the pasha," cried the lady. "What shall I do? If he finds you here, he will kill you! I am so frightened."

The khoja was frightened too. Again there came a knock at the gate.

"I have it," said the lady at last; and, taking Abdul by the arm, she said, "you must get into this box," indicating a large chest in the room. "Quick, quick, if you prize your life utter not a word, and, *In-shâ-Allah!* I shall save you."

Abdul saw his folly now that it was too late. It was his want of experience that had misled him; but, driven by the sense of danger, he entered the chest; the lady locked it and took the key.

A moment afterwards the pasha came in.

"I am very tired," he said, "bring me coffee and a chibook."

"Good evening, Pasha Effendi," said the lady. "Sit down. I have something to tell you."

"Bah!" said the pasha, "I want none of your woman's



THE MOSQUE OF SANTA SOFIA : FROM THE GALLERY

To face page 238

talk; 'the hair of woman is long, and her wits are short,' says the proverb. Bring me my pipe."

"But, Pasha Effendi," said the lady, "I have had an adventure to-day."

"Bah!" said the pasha, "what adventure can a woman have—forgot to paint your eyebrows or colour your nails, I suppose."

"No, Pasha Effendi. Be patient, and I will tell you. I went out to-day to write a letter."

"A letter?" said the pasha; "to whom would you write a letter?"

"Be patient," she said, "and I will tell you my story. So I came to the box of a young scribe with beautiful eyes."

"A young man with beautiful eyes," shouted the pasha. "Where is he? I'll kill him!" and he drew his sword.

The khoja in the chest heard every word and trembled with fear.

"Be patient, Pasha Effendi; I said I had an adventure, and you did not believe me. I told the young man that the letter was long, and that I could not stand in the street to write it. So I asked him to come and see me this afternoon."

"Here? To this house?" thundered the pasha.

"Yes, Pasha Effendi," said the lady. "So the khoja came here, and I gave him coffee and a cigarette, and we talked, and the minutes seemed like seconds, and the hours were as minutes. All at once came your knock at the gate, and I said to the khoja 'That is the pasha; and if he finds you here, he will kill you.'"

"And I *will* kill him," screamed the pasha, "Where is he?"

"Be patient, Pasha Effendi," said the lady, "and I will tell you. When you knocked a second time, I suddenly thought of the chest, and I put the khoja in."

"Let me at him!" screamed the pasha. "I'll cut off his head!"

"O pasha," she said, "what a hurry you are in to slay this comely youth. He is your prey; he cannot escape you. The youth is not only in the box, but it is locked, and the key is in my pocket. Here it is."

The lady walked over to the pasha, stretched out her hand, and gave him the key.

As he took it, she said:

"Philopena!"

"Bah!" said the pasha, in disgust. He threw the key on the floor and left the harem, slamming the door behind him.

After he had gone, the lady took up the key, unlocked the door, and let out the trembling khoja.

"Go now, khoja, to your box," she said. "Take down your sign and write instead: 'The wit of woman is twofold the wit of man,' for I am a woman, and in one day I have fooled two men."

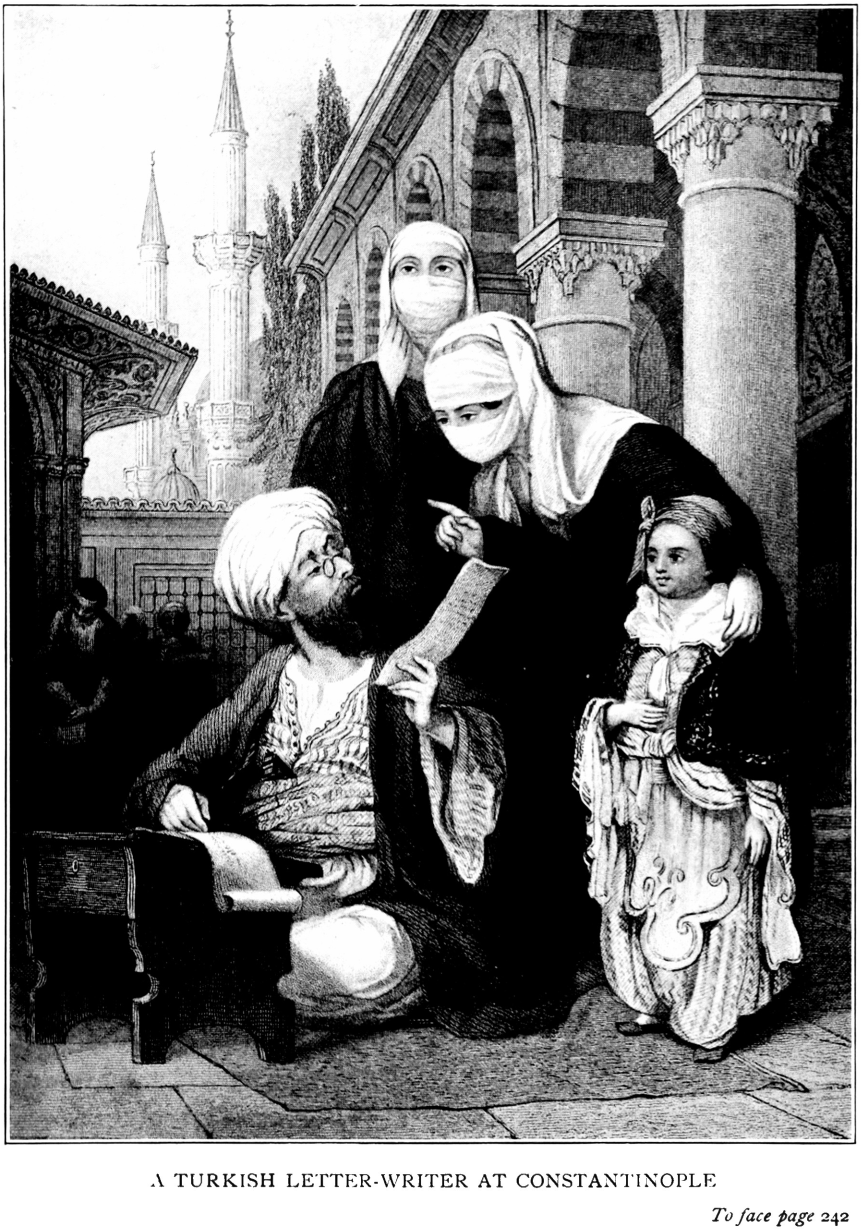
THE ALBANIAN'S LETTER

ONE of the most picturesque objects in the larger cities of the Near East—and, for that matter, of the Far East as well—is the clean and gaily bedecked booth of the scribe. It is generally planted in the busiest quarter of the town, under the thin, towering minarets of a great mosque, and on the shady side of a crowded *sok* or market-place. The interior of the little wooden booth, which somewhat resembles a sentry-box, is artistically arranged, and the walls are covered with specimens of calligraphy. Both in China and in Japan calligraphy is an art as well as a useful accomplishment, and the temples, tea-houses, and museums abound in reproductions of famous examples of penmanship (or, rather, of brushmanship—a delicate brush like that used by a painter being employed instead of a pen). These reproductions are hung on the walls like maps, or *kakemono*, and most of them are attributed to mediæval Buddhist monks or abbots, who lived in the good old days when people had time to write distinctly. Not a few, however, are the work of Admiral Togo, the late Prince Ito, the late General Nogi, and other celebrated men who were just as busy and just as modern as these. In the Near East the same custom prevails. Indeed, the Mohammedan pays more attention perhaps than the Japanese to the artistic side of calligraphy, owing to the fact that it is one of the few artistic diversions in which his religion permits him to indulge. He is not allowed to have representations of the human form in his house or in

his public buildings, so that when he wishes to decorate either the exterior or the interior of his home he does so by covering the walls with the geometrical devices which are so well known to the student of Oriental architecture. Or, more frequently, he reproduces on the walls some favourite *sura*, or a text from the Koran, or one of the nine and ninety beautiful names given to Allah in the Mohammedan rosary. And just as the Turk, who does not drink wine, learns to perceive in spring water different pleasant tastes and flavours unknown to the Christian, so the Turk who does not take in the illustrated papers learns to appreciate a specimen of handwriting as much as a European connoisseur would appreciate a fine drawing in black and white.

A mosque is the place where Islamic inscriptions can be seen at their best. On the walls are generally large shields whereon are written the names of Allah, Mohammed, and the first four Khalîfs. In the mosque of Santa Sophia those shields also serve to cover up the faces of the mosaic Cherubim which the Greeks had placed below the dome. On every convenient place on the walls pious artists paint not pictures, but calligraphic exercises which generally mean, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet," the verses of the Throne (Sura 2, 256), the Fatiha, or some such sentiment as "Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth," "Allah is he who sees and hears."

Over the mihrab or niche which marks the direction of the Holy City is almost invariably written the strange Koranic inscription, "Whenever Zacharias visited her in the mihrab" —an inscription which is chosen, not because it has any sense, for it has none, but because it looks ornamental. In fact, most Oriental inscriptions are pointless. The same remark replies to some extent to letter-writing as well. Words are chosen for their appearance on paper, and not so much for their meaning.



A TURKISH LETTER-WRITER AT CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page 242

"All Orientals, and particularly Arabs, have an idea that fine writing and fine speaking should not be too intelligible. No Turk is in the least astonished if he does not understand a composition written in Turkish. He merely respects the author as having a command of choice expressions. He hardly regards literature or writing as a normal part of life. He expects to understand a story when it is told him, or a business transaction when it is explained to him verbally, but he regards a book or a letter much as an Englishman regards a technical legal document—as a thing which he could not possibly write himself, and of which he can only be expected to understand the general drift. The Turk looks upon writing as a special art, in which it would be highly indecorous to employ ordinary language. In every town writers may be seen sitting at the street corners, or in their little shops. The man who has decided on the grave step of writing a letter communicates the substance of what he has to say to the writer, and the latter embodies it in suitable language, according to his own powers of composition and the rank of the person addressed, for it would be a want of etiquette to address a high official in a style which everybody can understand. If the recipient of a letter is himself not a literary character, he may require to have the document explained to him. It is said that during the Turco-Greek war many Turkish soldiers wrote to their families in Anatolia, saying that they were wounded, and requesting remittances; but that these requests, when written down by a professional letter-writer and deciphered by the village sage, were thought to be a statement that the sender of the letter was well and saluted his friends."

So says the English diplomatist who writes under the pseudonym of "Odysseus." Perhaps matters were even better when the Turks were almost wholly illiterate, and had to communicate largely by symbols. Any of my readers who has

seen a Turkish coin or postage stamp must have noticed that it bears a curious network of lines like those on the palm of the hand. This ornament is said to have originated with a Sultan who, being unable to sign his name, made his mark at the foot of all official documents by smearing the palm of his right hand with ink, and then applying it to the paper requiring signature. That Sultan should by rights be regarded as the inventor of the thumb-print system. He was certainly in advance of his age if he acted on the conviction that, while his signature could be forged or his seal stolen, the palms of his hand would always remain with him, and could never be counterfeited.

The symbolical system was once employed with great effect by the Grand Vizier of Suleïman the Magnificent when he went to besiege Vienna. Before doing so he thought it would be only polite to drop a hint of his intentions to the Austrian Ambassador in Vienna, so he sent that diplomatist a large melon. His idea was to intimate in a friendly way that the cannon-balls which he would throw into Vienna would be as large as that melon. It seems almost miraculous that the Austrians should have discovered this meaning, but they did so ; and, moreover, they sent a bigger melon back to the Vizier in order to imply that their artillery was still stronger than that of the Turks. And it turned out that they were right.

Flowers are still used as largely in a symbolical sense by the illiterate Turks as they are used by the very literate Japanese. They are principally employed as a means of communication between lovers, the rose being in special request as an emblem of beauty and joy. The orange-flower means hope, the marigold despair, the amaranth constancy. The tulip is a reproach for infidelity. Among illiterate lovers bouquets of flowers called selams supply the place of letters, and very good substitutes they must make considering, as I

have already pointed out, that most of the written letters are unintelligible to the receiver. By means of flowers, a slave, especially if he be a gardener, sometimes holds tender converse with his mistress even in the presence of that mistress's legal husband.

But the scribe is also employed largely by lovers. In Stamboul these scribes sit near the Custom-house—as was formerly the habit of the scribes in Naples—also in the bazaars and at the corners of the streets. They are distinguished by a *calomboyo* or bright brass inkstand and pen-case stuck into the girdle. If a Turk is going to law he gets a scribe to write an *arzuhal* or statement of his case. If he fears the evil eye, the scribe transcribes a certain passage of the Koran and adds thereunto certain mysterious cyphers looking like a doctor's prescription (and probably as efficacious as most doctors' prescriptions). This document he gives to the patient (or client, or whatever you like to call him) as a sure and certain protection against (1) disease, (2) magic, (3) the Evil Eye, (4) the malice of enemies, (5) the assaults of robbers. It is said to be quite as good for most complaints as the most widely advertised English or American patent medicines (*i.e.* no good at all), and it costs almost nothing.

In the illustration we see an anxious mother obtaining such a protection for her child ; and it will be noticed, by the way, that, in accordance with the rules of Moslem politeness, the scribe does not look the lady in the face. A favourite amulet in such cases is the "Kef Marjam" (hand of Mary), which is either represented on blue glass or inscribed on paper and hung on the head or breast of the little one. The Virgin Mary referred to is, of course, the Mother of Christ. Mohammed writes most reverentially about her in the Koran, even declaring his belief in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and he declares in one place (Sura 4, 155) that

the Jews are accursed "because they spoke against Mary a gross calumny." He commits rather a "howler," however, by saying that she was the sister of Aaron.

The scribe is as a rule a bearded man with a turban, and a loose, flowing robe which reaches to his heels. The illustration represents an old-fashioned scribe seated outside his booth in summer-time. Inside there is just room for himself and for his client, who sits opposite him. Between the two is a tiny table holding a tray with ink-horn, pens and sand—the latter used, of course, as blotting-paper. In the booths of well-known scribes the client's stool is seldom or never unoccupied during the busy part of the day. Very often, in addition to the client inside, one may see three or four ladies each waiting her turn to consult the man of letters. One is faintly reminded of the queue at a London theatre.

The walls of the scribe's cabin are of glass with dainty curtains so arranged that all the passers-by can see both the letter-writer and his visitor. This open-air way of transacting business is probably due to the Mahommedan's aversion from having his wife, sister, or daughter left alone with any man in a place where they cannot both be seen. But of course the clients are very often of the male sex.

One day, when business in the letter-writing line was somewhat slack, a young Albanian approached the booth of a scribe on the south side of the Valideh Mosque, near the Stamboul end of the outer bridge in Constantinople, and gazed at it in astonishment. He was slim, handsome, and admirably proportioned, as very many of the Albanian youths are; and though the tight-fitting national costume which he wore was so patched and mended that it would have been difficult to tell which was the original dress and which were the patches, nevertheless it set off his figure to the greatest advantage. Indeed, it would have pleased the impartial eye more

than the best creased trousers and most irreproachable morning coat that ever came out of Bond Street.

Judging by the way he stared, this Arnaout shepherd was fresh from the hills. He had evidently been told for the first time in his life that there was such a thing as an alphabet and an art of writing. The news had no doubt astonished him, but there is about the Albanian something of the wild Indian's stoicism, and, when finally he mustered up sufficient courage to enter the letter-writer's booth, it was in silence and with a face which was a mask of impenetrable reserve. All true Albanians wear voluminous cinctures wound about the waist in many folds, and in these cinctures they carry a surprising variety of those small belongings which a Westerner usually carries in his pockets. From his cincture our hero drew forth a cigarette case and, having slowly lighted one, he calmly smoked and meditated without saying a word. The scribe, being an Oriental himself, offered no objection to these dilatory proceedings. Besides, he was busy inditing a petition to the Ministry of Marine for a fisherman who had already given him the drift of what he wanted to say. Finally the Arnaout broke silence with a pious invocation to Allah after which he asked the letter-writer—whom he addressed as "O Learned One!"—if it was true that people at a distance could understand the signs he made on paper. Laying down his pen and raising his head to look at his visitor for the first time, the grey-bearded savant assured him that anything that he wished to say could be said on paper. On hearing this, the Albanian was greatly relieved, but he sighed deeply as he slowly took his lute from his shoulder, and began tuning it.

The Albanian lute is a long-handled, three-stringed instrument, and is played with a quill. The sweetest strain it can produce is a monotonous wail in the minor key. The shepherd earnestly asked the learned man to put down in

black and white the sad Albanian air he was playing. The scribe patiently waited, however, holding his pen ready to take down faithfully the Albanian's words, whenever he was ready to begin speaking. Being a wise man he knew that music could not be written down, but he refrained from explaining this to his client.

The Albanian, poor man, had innocently imagined that the tune would be at once committed to writing. After a while, however, he accompanied his instrumental music with a pathetic chant which was meant for his loved ones at home; and this chant the learned clerk endeavoured to take down as well as he could. It ran somewhat as follows:

"To my father and mother, my betrothed, my brothers and my sisters and every member of my clan. Greetings! A greeting for every day of the long years I have been away! I kiss your hands, father and mother, and ask ye to forgive this my long silence of five years! But I knew not that paper could speak and play the tune I am playing"—and here the musician turned a flushed face to the scribe and earnestly besought him to take it all down and not to miss one note of the tune.

The humble and primitive instrument wailed and tinkled in harmony with its master's feelings, and finally tears came into the youth's eyes.

"For five years," he sang, "for five years have I been a shepherd, and every evening I have played to ye, my father and mother, in my solitude; but truly I did not know that paper could carry the tune. I often thought of ye as I watched my flocks on the hills. I did not go home because I was saving up money to bring to ye, I was waiting till I should be rich enough to claim the hand of my betrothed, and to ask for your blessing on us both.

"Greetings to ye all! Greetings for each month of

·these five long years which have passed! Lo! One *lira* [one Turkish pound or about seventeen shillings and sixpence, English money] have I received each moon for guarding my master's sheep in Anatolia; and little, indeed, of this money has been spent on food. Two *piastres* [fourpence] a day is all I ever spend; and the rest I will bring with me and we shall be happy together and shall partake of *prasa*" (a favourite dish of the Albanians. Its principal ingredient is leeks).

Flushed by the thought of a speedy return home, the youth played faster and faster, stopping, however, from time to time in order to impress on the now weary scribe the necessity of not missing a note but of taking it all down just as he sang it.

"And do you think they will recognize my voice?" he asked during one of these parentheses; but the aged man of letters made no reply, having, as a matter of fact, returned to the composition of the petition to the Ministry of Marine.

Finally he paid his fee and added a piastre for postage, but the letter-writer suggested that an address was also necessary. The address was of the vaguest possible description. It was to Mahomet, living "near the ford," five miles from a hamlet with an unpronounceable name on the Montenegrin border. And, being a wise and far-seeing man, the scribe pondered within himself when the youth went light-heartedly away, and he asked himself, "Why, in the most holy name of Allah, should I buy a stamp for a letter with such an address as this? It will never reach its destination. Besides, did not the *Tanin* announce fully a year ago that the Montenegrins had left not an Albanian house standing in that part of the frontier?"

And while passing that evening over the Old Bridge, on his way home to Scutari, he quietly dropped the letter into the Golden Horn, which hides so many mysteries in its

bosom. And, by Allah, it was no great loss, being written in a style so learned and obscure that, if it ever did reach Halim's parents, they would have had to engage another letter-writer to read it and he would probably have deduced from it the conclusion that the lad was married to a princess and had just been appointed Grand Vizier. But Halim the Albanian returned, joyous, to Anatolia and sang songs of love as he touched his lute and watched his flocks on the mountain.

ONE STORY ABOUT STRONG DRINK

ONE STORY ABOUT STRONG DRINK

The Effects of Ràki



Daily Mirror

THE MODERN SUBLIME PORTE

To face page 253

THE EFFECTS OF RÀKI

BEKRI MUSTAFE, who lived during the reign of Sultan Selim, was a celebrated toper, and perhaps at that time the only Moslem drunkard in Turkey. Consequently, he was often the subject of conversation in circles both high and low. He was denounced from the pulpits of mosques; and mothers pointed him out to their young sons as a dreadful warning and example. It happened that the Sultan had occasion to speak to Bekri one day at the Sublime Porte, and his Majesty asked him in the course of the conversation what pleasure he found in drinking so much ràki, and why he disobeyed the laws of the Prophet.

"O Lord of the Faithful," Bekri replied, "Knowest thou not that ràki is a boon unto man; that it makes the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the lame to walk, and the poor rich? And knowest thou not, furthermore, O Sun of Grace and Father of all Goodness, that I, Bekri, when drunk, can hear, see, and walk like two Bekris?"

The Sultan, to verify the truth of this statement, sent his servants into the highways to bring four men, one blind, another deaf, the third lame, and the fourth poor. Directly these were brought, his Majesty ordered ràki to be served to them in company with Bekri. They had not been drinking long when, to the glory of Bekri, the deaf man said: "I hear the sound of great rumblings."

And the blind man replied: *Sahîh!* (True!) *Ishtê Baq, Aman! Aman!* (Look! look! Good Gracious me!) "I

can see him, O Successor of the Prophet, the Elect of Heaven ! It is an enemy who seeks our destruction."

The lame man asked where he was, saying, "Show him to me, by Allah ! and I will quickly dispatch him."

And the poor man called out : "Don't be afraid to kill him ; I've got his blood money in my pocket."

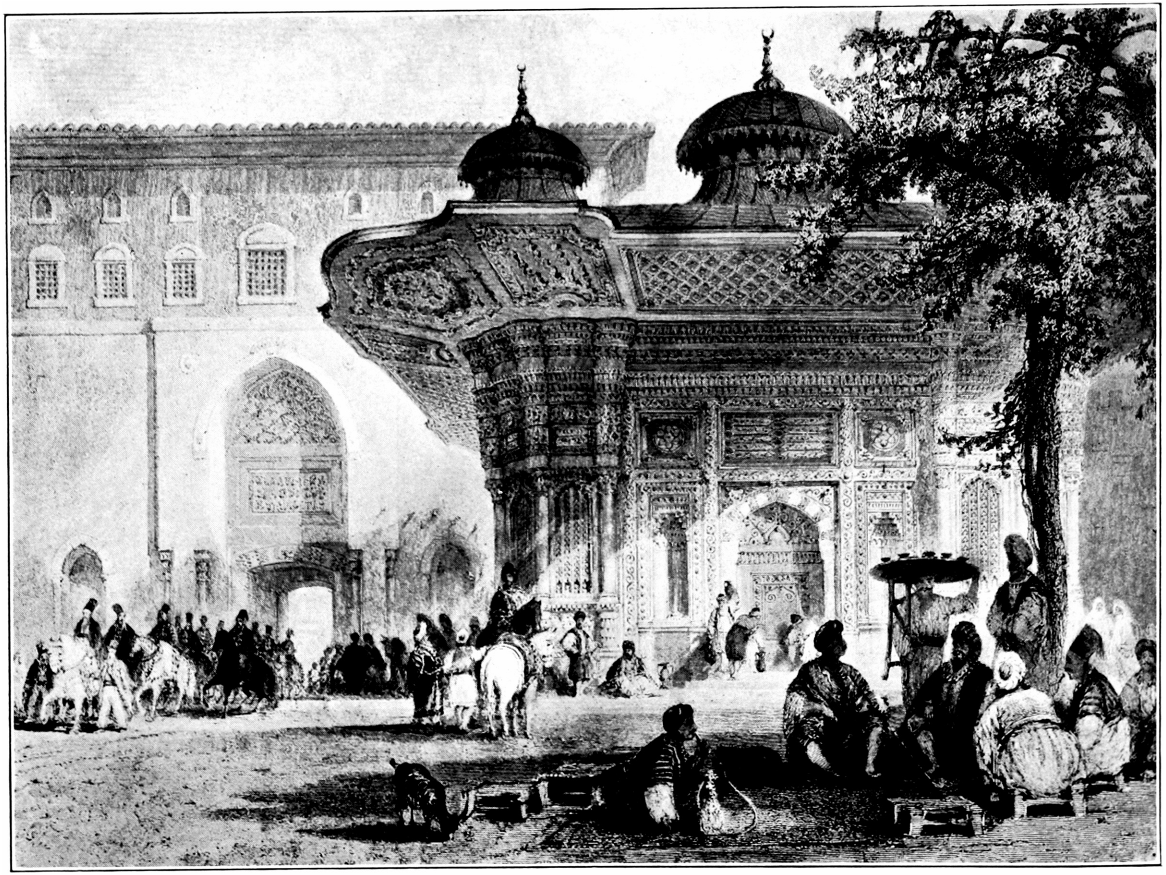
Just then a funeral happened to pass by the Sublime Porte, and Bekri got up and ordered the solemn procession to stop. Removing the lid of the coffin, he whispered a few words into the ear of the dead man, and then putting his ear to the dead man's mouth, vented an exclamation of surprise. He then ordered the funeral to proceed, and returned to the palace.

The Sultan asked him what he had said to the dead man, and what the dead man had replied.

"I simply asked him O Khalifatu-'r-rasuli-'llah," * replied Bekri, "whither he was going and what disease he had died of, and he replied he was going to Paradise, and that he had died from drinking ràki without a mézé."

Whereupon the Sultan, understanding what the old toper wanted, ordered that the mézé should be immediately served.

* Khalîf of the Apostle of God. The transcription of this phrase is correct, having been made by a competent scholar. I make this remark lest the reader might be inclined to suspect, from the bizarre form of the utterance, that the ràki was beginning to have its effects on Bekri's powers of speech.



FOUNTAIN NEAR THE BABA HAMMAYUN, OR "GREAT GATE OF THE SERAGLIO," CONSTANTINOPLE

To face page 255

THREE STORIES ABOUT THE DEVIL

THREE STORIES ABOUT THE DEVIL

THE DEVIL AND THE DISCONTENTED AGRICULTURIST
THE BRIBE
OLD MEN MADE YOUNG



HOW THE DEVIL LOST HIS WAGER

To face page 257

THE DEVIL AND THE DISCONTENTED AGRICULTURIST

THE Place of a Thousand Tombs is naturally a favourite resort of jinns, demons, and fallen angels, who frequently show themselves to men. A peasant who lived near this dreadful cemetery was once ploughing his field, panting with fatigue, when the devil appeared before him and said:

"Oh, poor man! you complain of your lot, and with justice, for your labour is not that of a man: it is that of a beast of burden. Now I have made a wager that I shall find a contented man; so give me the handle of your plough and the goad of your oxen that I may do the work for you."

The peasant consenting, the devil touched the oxen, and in one turn of the plough all the furrows of the field were opened up and the work finished.

"Is it well done?" asked the devil.

"*Evet!* [yes]," replied the man, "*Guyzèl òldu*, *ùssta* [it is well done, master], but seed is very dear this year."

In answer to this the devil shook his long tail in the air, and lo! little seeds began to fall like hail from the sky.

"I hope," said the devil, "that I have gained my wager."

"*Pèk īyi, pèk īyi* [very good, very good]," answered the peasant, in a non-committal tone, however, and without enthusiasm; "but, after all, what's the good of that? These seeds might be lost. You do not take into consideration frost,

blighting winds, drought, damp, storms, diseases of plants, and other things. How can I judge as yet?"

"*Hā, Bàq!* [Behold, there]," said the devil, "in this box are both sun and rain; take the box and use it as you please."

The peasant did so, and to very good purpose, for his corn soon ripened and up to that time he had never seen so good a harvest. But the corn of his neighbours had also prospered from the rain and sun.

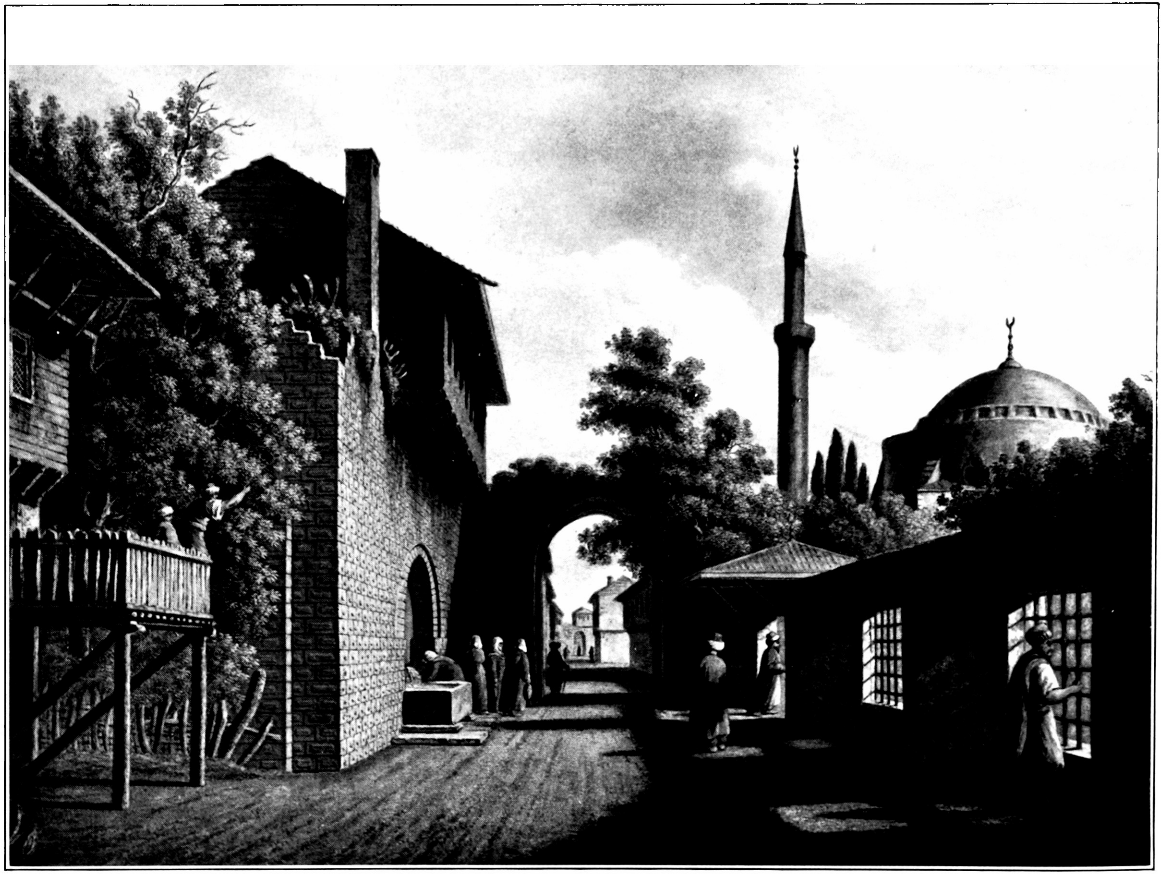
At harvest time the devil came, and saw that the man was looking with envious eyes at his neighbour's field where the corn was as good as his own.

"Have you been able to obtain what you desire?" asked the devil.

"Alas, master!" answered the man, "all the barns will break down under the weight of the sheaves. The grain will be sold at a low price. This fine harvest will make me sit on ashes."

While he was speaking the devil had taken an ear of corn from the ground and was crushing it in his hand. As soon as he blew on the grains they all turned into pure gold. The peasant took up one and examined it attentively on all sides, and then in a despairing tone he cried out "*Amān! Amān!* [O dear! O dear!] I must now go and spend no end of money in order to melt down all these ingots and send them to the mint."

The devil wrung his hands in despair. He had lost his wager. He could do many things, but he could not make a contented man.



"OLD STAMBOUL"

To face page 259

THE BRIBE

THERE once lived in Stamboul a man and wife who were so well mated that, though they had been married for quite a number of years, their life was nevertheless one of ideal harmony. This troubled the shèytān (devil) very much. He had destroyed the peace of home after home; he had successfully created enmity between husband and wife, hatred between father and son, and aversion between brother and sister. In the midst of families once harmonious he had made chasms of uncharitableness so deep and wide that nothing save the mercy of Allah could span the gap. In this one little home alone did he fail, in spite of his greatest endeavours. One day the devil was talking to an old woman when the man who had thus far baffled him passed by. The devil groaned at the thought of his repeated failures. Turning to the old woman he said:

"I will give you as a reward a pair of yellow slippers if you make that man quarrel with his wife."

The old woman was delighted, and at once began to scheme and work for the coveted slippers. At an hour when she was sure to find the lady alone she went and solicited alms, weeping and bemoaning her sad fate at being a lonely old woman, whose husband was long since dead. The hanoum (lady) took pity on the old woman and was very generous to her. Each day the hanoum gave the old woman something; in fact, she gave her so much that the thought that her good husband might think her extravagant often caused her some uneasiness.

One day the old woman looked into the shop of her benefactress's husband, and planted the first evil seed by calling out:

"Ah! if men only knew where the money they work for from morning to night goes, or knew what their wives do when they are away, some homes would not be so happy."

The evil woman then went her way, and the good shopman wondered why she had said those words to him. A passing thought suggested that it was strange that of late his wife had asked him several times for a few extra piastres. The next day the old woman as usual solicited alms of her victim. In the fulness of her hypocrisy she embraced the young lady before departing, taking care to leave the imprint of her blackened hand on her dupe's back. The old woman then again went to the shop, looked at her victim's husband, and said:

"Oh, how blind men are! They only look in a woman's face for truth and loyalty; they forget to look at the back where the stamp of the lover's hand is to be seen."

As before, the old woman disappeared. But the mind of the shopman was troubled and his heart was heavy. In this oppressed state he went to his home, and when an opportunity offered he looked at his wife's back, and was aghast to see there the impression of a hand. He got up and left his home, a broken-hearted man.

The devil was deeply impressed at the signal success of the old woman, and hastened to redeem his promise. He took a long pole, tied the pair of slippers at the end, and hurried off to the old woman. Arriving at her house, he called out to her to open the window. When she did this, he thrust in the pair of yellow slippers, begging her to take them, but for the sake of Jihànnam (Hell) not to come near him. They were hard-earned slippers, he said. The old woman had succeeded where even he, the devil, had failed; so that he was afraid of her, and was anxious to keep out of her way.



THE FAMOUS GOLDEN GATE AT THE SEVEN TOWERS

To face page 261

OLD MEN MADE YOUNG

IT is obligatory on all Moslems to praise Allah five times a day. In Psamatia, an ancient Armenian village situated near the Seven Towers, there once lived, however, a certain Mohammedan smith, whose custom it was to curse the shèytān (devil) and his works regularly five times a day instead of praying to God. He argued that it is the devil's fault that man has need to pray at all. The devil was angered at being thus persistently cursed, and decided to punish the smith, or at least prevent his continuing any longer his unusual and disagreeable practice.

Taking the form of a young man he went to the smith and engaged himself as an apprentice. After a time the devil told the smith that hammering on hot iron was a very poor and mean way of earning a living; but that he, the apprentice, would show his master how money was to be made. The smith asked what he, a young beginner, could do. Thereupon the devil told him that he was endowed with a great gift, the power to make old men young again. Though incredulous, the smith finally allowed himself to be persuaded by his smooth-tongued apprentice to let a sign be put above his door, stating that aged people could here be restored to youth. This extraordinary sign attracted a great many people, but the devil asked such high prices that most of them went away again, preferring old age, with all its miseries, to the loss of so much money.

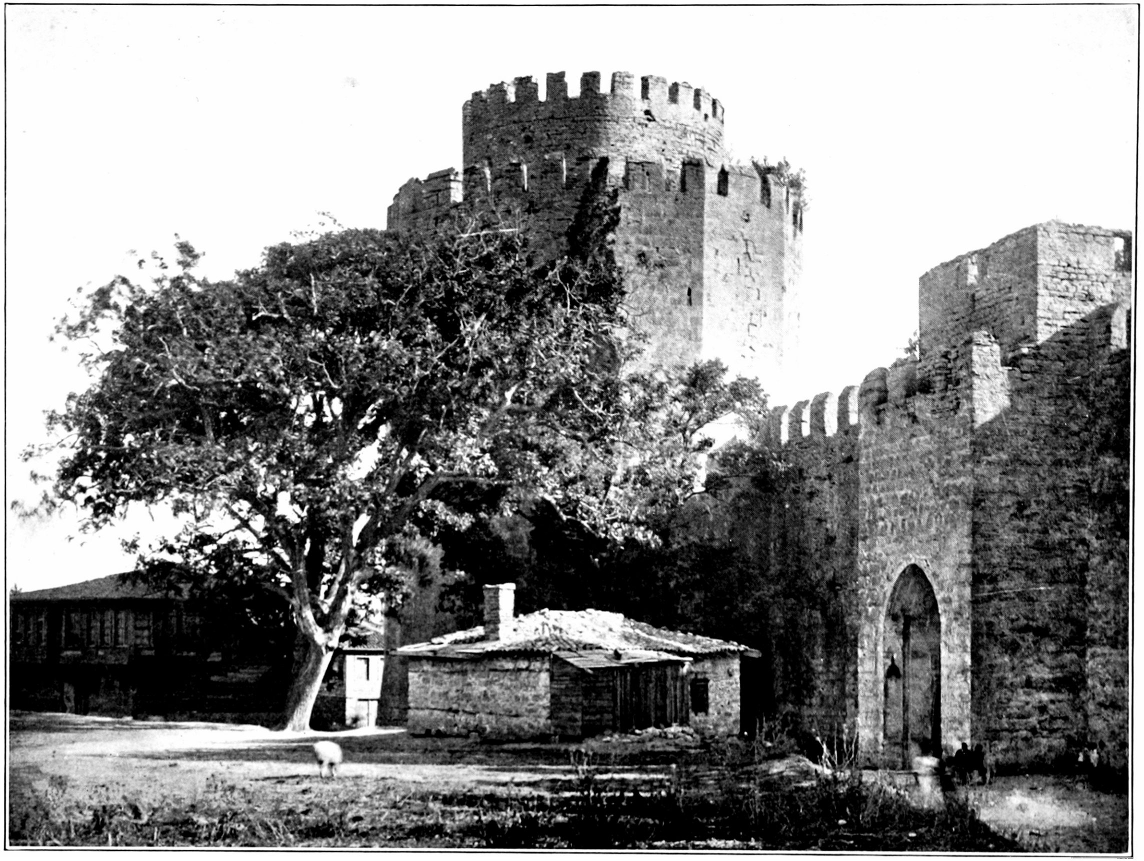
At last one old man agreed to pay the sum demanded by

the devil, whereupon he was promptly cast into the furnace, the master-smith blowing the bellows for a small remuneration. After a good deal of vigorous blazing on the part of the furnace and blowing on the part of the smith, the devil raked out a young man. As a result of this successful operation, the fame of the smith extended far and wide, and many were the aged that made a pilgrimage to his smithy in order to regain their youth. This lucrative business went on for some time, becoming more and more lucrative every day; and at last the smith, thinking to himself that it was no very difficult thing to throw an old man into the furnace and rake him out of the ashes again, rejuvenated and handsome, decided to dispense with his apprentice's services. But of course he kept the sign above the door, nay, he even had it embellished and repainted by a cunning Greek artist.

Now, it so happened that a captain of the janissaries, who was a very aged man, came to him, and, after bargaining for a much more modest sum than his apprentice would have asked, the smith thrust him into the furnace as the devil, his apprentice, had been accustomed to do. He then seized the bellows and worked at them till the perspiration streamed down his face. He afterwards raked in the ashes for the young man, but he only raked out cinders and bones. Great was his consternation, but what could he do?

The devil in the meantime had gone to the head of the janissaries, and had informed him of what had taken place. The poor smith was arrested, tried, and condemned to be bowstrung, as it was proved that the missing janissary was last seen to enter his shop.

Just as the smith was about to be executed, the devil again appeared before him in the form of the discharged apprentice, and asked him if he wished his life to be saved. The answer to that question was—as The Hon. Mr. H. H. Asquith would say



INSIDE THE SEVEN TOWERS, AND NEAR THE GOLDEN GATE

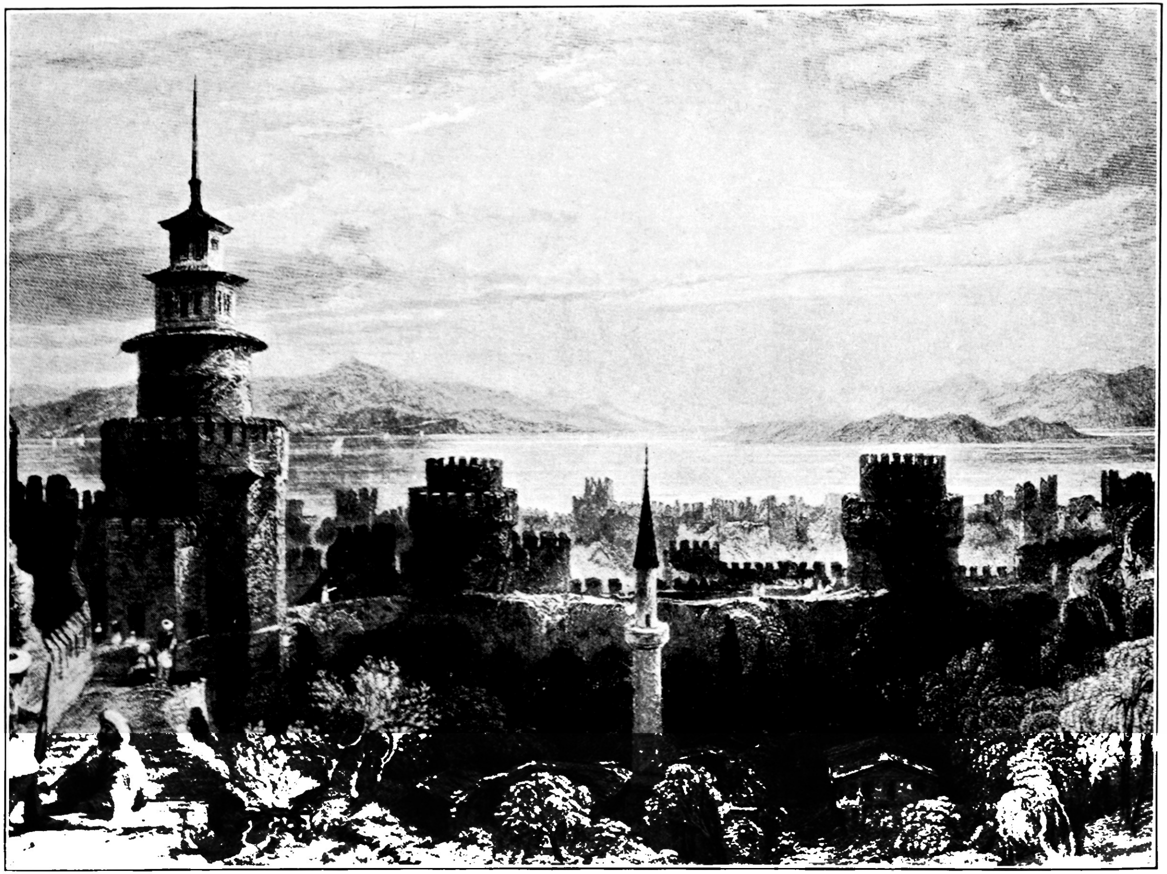
To face page 262

—" in the affirmative" ; but, raising his hand to demand silence (for the smith was making a dreadful uproar), the devil continued his interrupted sentence. " If so," quoth he, " then I can save you, but I shall only consent to do so on one condition —that you cease cursing the devil five times a day and pray henceforth as other Mussulmans pray." To this the smith vociferously agreed. Thereupon the apprentice called in a loud voice to those who were about to execute his master : " What will you of this man ? He has not killed the janissary. The janissary is not dead, for I have just seen him entering his home."

This was found to be true, and the smith was liberated, after having thus learned by bitter experience the truth of the ancient Turkish proverb, " Curse not even the devil."

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES



STATE PRISON OF THE SEVEN TOWERS: LOOKING OVER THE SEA OF MARMORA

To face page 267

ALI ON EARTHQUAKES

WHEN living in Constantinople I had a boatman named Ali who used to row me across the Golden Horn every morning and evening. Beyond the silent salutation with his hand which he always gave me, standing erect, both at meeting and at parting, Ali never ventured as a rule to intrude upon my thoughts or to break the silence. He was my boatman for fully ten years, and only twice during the whole of that period did he ask me a question or utter more than a few words.

I remember both of the occasions on which he spoke to me, and I think it may be of some interest to put on record what Ali then said. I might first mention, however, that like all Mahommedans and all Russian peasants, Ali adored his God with a fervour and a publicity or, as the theologians would call it, a want of human respect, which would be considered positively indecent in the West. In other words, he was neither ashamed nor afraid of praying in public. Very often indeed, during the years he was with me, did I come to the water's edge only to find Ali praying or about to pray. Whether he saw me or not, it is for him to say ; but he never took any notice of me or offered to cease praying. It mattered not whether his thumbs were yet in his ears, or whether he was about to make the final prostration, or whether he was only about to begin his ablutions. The great fact remained that Ali was communing with Allah, and, so far as he was concerned, I could either walk, take another

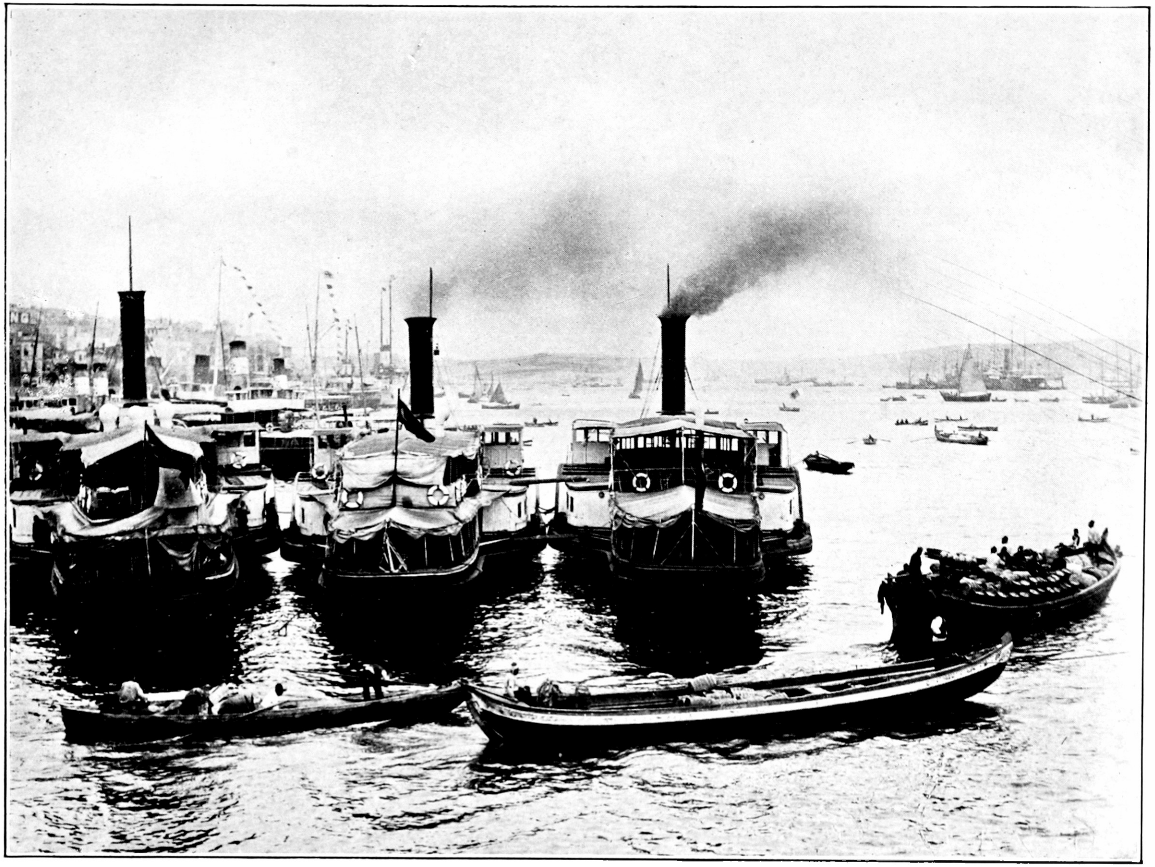
boat, or, in a word, do as I chose, for Ali knew me not. It was immaterial to him what I might do. Evidently he did not care whether I was in a hurry or not. The hour had been called for him to pray and the All-Perceiving knew this. That was enough.

The first time Ali spoke to me on any subject outside of his orders for the day was when he asked me if England was an island. I told him it was, but I added that it was larger than Prinkipo. This is the largest of the Princes' Islands in the Marmora, but though not nearly as large as Hayling Island, it was the largest island whereof Ali had any experience. My boatman pondered for a moment, but I interrupted his reverie by saying, "Why do you ask me that question, Ali?"

"Chelebi," he replied, "I have been a boatman for forty years on the Golden Horn; and every week five, ten, sometimes more, vessels laden with English coal come and discharge here. I have been wondering in what condition the interior of that island is, and if the crust is not in a dangerously weak state as the result of so much coal having been removed from the interior."

I assured him that I could not say if there was enough safety either above ground or below ground as the result of so much coal being taken out, but I added that the mines were not all over the country, and that the Island of England was very large.

Ali nodded his head, but he was not quite satisfied, though my answer ended the conversation. The second time on which Ali spoke to me was on the afternoon of July 10, 1894, the day of the great earthquake, when, at 12.25 P.M. (not many people who experienced that earthquake can forget it), the waters of the Golden Horn boiled, advanced, receded and returned. I entered the boat which was waiting for me



Daily Mirror

BOSPHORUS BOATS

To face page 268

notwithstanding the earthquake, the severity of which was great.

Ali was silent as usual and, when half-way across the Horn, he said to me, "Chelebi" (Sir), "there is one sura of the Koran which I never understood until to-day. The Book writes that if Allah wishes, He can destroy the world. I never before understood the meaning of that verse. Now I understand it : Allah gives intelligence at the hour at which it pleaseth Him."

I made no comment, but I asked Ali if he had been frightened. To this he gravely replied : "Chelebi, I was sitting down and something told me to get up, and I got up."

The remainder of the journey was completed in silence, but I thought a good deal, and wondered if perhaps in his profound belief in Allah, Ali saw any farther than I saw.

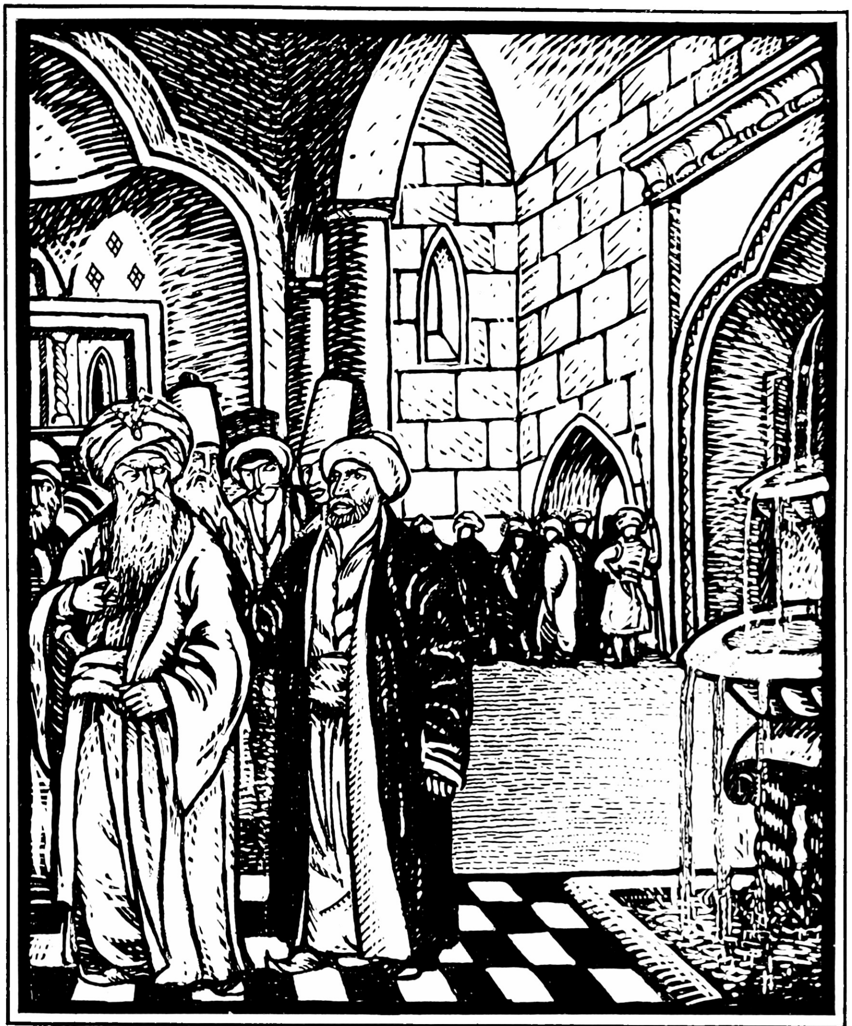
ABOU-NOUAS

IT is thanks to Abou-Nouas that the name of Haroun-ul-Raschid, the great Sultan of Bagdad, still lives among the Christian and Mohammedan Arabs. The couplets of Abou-Nouas are numerous and they cause merriment whenever the Arabian Nights tales are told. Many anecdotes are also related about the same poet. The following anecdote I have never seen in print, but I have often heard it in the mouths of Arabs.

The Sultan, who patronized the Court poet and philosopher, asked him one day if he could make an excuse that would in itself be a greater insult than the insult for which forgiveness was asked.

Abou-Nouas considered long but bided his time, not forgetting the command of his Majesty. For a desire expressed by Haroun-ul-Raschid was a command that not even the Arabian Poet Laureate dared ignore. Finally, at one of Haroun-ul-Raschid's ceremonious receptions, Abou-Nouas approached the monarch at a serious moment, a moment when the attention of the Sultan was most engaged, and familiarly slapped his Majesty on the back. The astonishment and anger of Haroun-ul-Raschid were beyond words, and many of the courtiers were quite ready to dispatch Abou-Nouas without further ceremony had but Haroun-ul-Raschid given the assenting look.

As soon as he caught the eye of his Majesty, however, Abou-Nouas apologetically remarked: "I crave your Majesty's forgiveness, but I thought it was her Majesty whom I had caressed and not yourself, and this I say in obedience to your Majesty's own august commands."



W B.

ABOU-NOUAS CRAVING FORGIVENESS

To face page 270

MAN'S SPAN OF LIFE

IT is said that before the birth of Death the Creator asked all of the creatures he had created how long they wanted to live. Youth, strength and vigour reigned amongst all, and man, having been created nearest to the image of Allah Himself, was called first and asked how long he wished to live. Man was then buoyant and careless and strong. He knew not what it meant to be asked how long he wished to live, for Death had not as yet been born. So he answered unthinkingly: "Thirty years, O Allah!" Perhaps a vague memory had remained with him of summers he had already lived. They had been pleasant summers; and what better could he wish for his children than for two score and ten such happy years? Indeed, he was thinking only of his posterity, not of himself, and was surprised when the Creator suddenly said, "As you have willed, so be it! Let, then, your limit of life be thirty years."

In turn were the other creatures of the Creation asked how long they wished to live. Many imitated Man and asked for thirty years. Others, however, asked for more, and they got as much as they asked for. The donkey asked for more and got it; the monkey followed suit; and then the remaining creatures of the Creation asked almost at random and they got whatever they asked for. But our tale does not deal with them all, only with the parrot and the tortoise who were more extravagant than most of the others in their desire for length of days.

When youthful Man noticed this great diversity amongst his creatures, he returned to the Creator and pointed out that,

seeing he was the first to be asked, it was hardly meet that he should also be one of the first to die. Allah told him that what he had asked had been given unto him, and that if he had any wish to change he must negotiate with the others. Man did now wish for more years, and he thereupon looked about him to see who would be likely to give him of their superfluous summers. The first creature he met was the donkey, who seemed to set no great score by the number of years he had to live, and who willingly gave Man no less than twenty years off his own span of life.

Man had now got fifty years, but even this did not seem an adequate number for Allah's leading creature, and Man looked around him again in search of somebody else with a few summers to spare. He next met the monkey who, after much negotiation, gave the superior animal ten years. The parrot pityingly threw in another ten, while the tortoise, who had himself asked for much, was slow in coming to a decision —and indeed he has not quite made up his mind about it yet. Occasionally he lets a man (or more frequently a woman) have some of his many years, but he has not yet come to a definite decision as to the exact number he can spare, and it is unlikely that he will ever come to a decision. Man's age was thus brought up to about seventy by the final help of the monkey and the parrot.

Properly speaking, Man's life, therefore, is but the one score summers, and ten given him by the Creator. He negotiated, as we have seen, for the balance, and brought the whole total up to three score and ten. But everything above thirty is borrowed capital, and not very good capital at that. Up to one score and ten Man leads the life of a man ; he is buoyant, confident, and strong. Then, if he lives, he draws on the borrowed years—the years he got by way of alms from the inferior animals.

The saddest and the hardest years of these borrowed periods are the years which the donkey gave him—the years from thirty to fifty. Labour and toil and trouble are his share throughout these twenty years ; and the donkey is even grateful to him to-day for having shortened a little his own hard and monotonous life. The donkey gave the years, but it could only give a donkey's years—years of monotony and dulness and work.

The majority of people to-day would gladly return to the donkey the years which it gave. The twenty years which Man persuaded the monkey and the parrot to part with could also be returned without any great loss to the human community. Both the monkey and the parrot could only give what they have, consequently a man is a monkey from fifty to sixty and a parrot from sixty to seventy. Those last twenty years are more kindly, however, than the preceding twenty, and entail little suffering. Consequently they are often envied by those labouring through the years given by the donkey. If a man lives beyond seventy it is the tortoise to which he is indebted for this prolongation of his life, and he cannot complain if these last sad years smack of the slowness and the caution of that deliberate and shell-bound amphibian.

WE KNOW NOT WHAT THE DAWN MAY BRING FORTH

IN the age of the janissaries the Sèr-àssker Pàsha, or Minister of War, summoned in all haste to his presence the chief farrier of the army, and ordered him to make immediately two hundred thousand horseshoes. The farrier was aghast, and explained that to make such a quantity of horseshoes, both time and smiths would be required. The Sèr-àssker Pàsha replied :

"It is the order of his Majesty that these two hundred thousand horseshoes be ready by to-morrow ; if not, your head will pay the penalty."

The poor farrier replied that, knowing now that he was doomed, he would be unable, through nervousness, to make even a fifth of the number. The Sèr-àssker Pàsha would not listen to reason, and left in anger, reiterating the order of the Padishah.

The farrier retired to his rooms deeply dejected. His wife, woman-like, endeavoured to encourage and comfort him, saying :

"Cheer up, husband, drink your ràki, eat your mézé, and be cheerful, for we know not what the dawn may bring forth."

"Èywāh!" (alas!), said the farrier, "the dawn will not bring forth two hundred thousand horseshoes, and my head will pay the penalty."



"NAIL HIM DOWN WELL, FRIEND"

To face page 275

Late that night there was a tremendous knocking at his door. The poor farrier thought that it was an inquiry as to how many horseshoes were already made, and, trembling with fear, he went and opened the door. Sure enough, it was a messenger from the Seraskierat (Ministry of War). The farrier was unable to utter a word, but even if he had desired to do so, the soldier would not have given him time to speak, for he immediately shouted :

" Make haste, farrier, make haste and let us have sixteen nails at once, for the Sèr-àssker Pàsha has been suddenly removed to Paradise by the hand of Allah." . . .

The farrier collected, not sixteen but forty nails of the best he had, and, handing them to the messenger, said :

" Nail him down tightly, securely, and well, O friend ! Nail him so that he will not get up again, for had not this happened, these nails would have been required to keep *me* in my coffin."

KING KARA-KUSH OF BITHYNIA

A KING of Bithynia, named Kara-kush, who was blind of an eye, was considered in his day to be a reasonable, just and feeling man. He administered justice upon the basis of the law, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," and enlarged or modified it as circumstances demanded.

Now it so happened that a weaver put out a man's eye by accident. He was brought before the king or kadi—for in those days the kings acted as kadis—who promptly condemned him, in accordance with the law, to the loss of an eye. The weaver pleaded touchingly, saying :

"Oh, kadi ! I have a wife and a large family, and I support them by throwing the shuttle from the right to the left, and again from the left to the right ; first using the one eye and then the other. If you remove one of my eyes, I shall not be able to weave, and my wife and children will suffer the pangs of hunger. Why not, in the place of my eye, remove that of the hunter who uses but one eye in exercising his profession, and to whom two eyes are superfluous ?"

The kadi was impressed, acknowledged the justice of the weaver's remarks, and immediately sent for the hunter. The hunter being brought, the kadi was greatly rejoiced to notice that the hunter's eyes were exactly the same colour as his own. He asked the hunter how he earned his living, and receiving the answer that he was a hunter, the kadi asked him how he shot his arrows. By way of reply the hunter raised his arms,



WHY THE CADI'S NEW EYE WATCHED FOR RAT HOLES

To face page 276

put his head on one side, and closed one of his eyes. The kadi said the weaver was right, and immediately sent for the surgeon to have the eye removed. Furthermore, the kadi bethought him that he might profit by this occasion and have the hunter's eye placed in his own empty socket. The surgeon set to work and prepared the cavity to receive the hunter's eye. This done he removed the hunter's eye with a practised hand and was about to place it in the prepared socket when it accidentally slipped from his fingers to the ground, and was snatched up by the cat. The surgeon was terrified and madly ran after the cat; but alas! the cat had eaten up the eye. What was he to do? On the inspiration of the moment he snatched out the eye of the cat, and placing it in the kadi's head, bound it up.

Some time after, the surgeon asked the kadi how he saw.

"Oh," replied the kadi, "with my old eye I see as usual, but, strange to say, the new eye you placed in my head is continually searching and watching for rat-holes."

THE WISE SON OF ALI PASHA

HASSAN was a servant of his Majesty Sultan Ahmet. Having been employed for twenty-five years in the palace, and being now on the threshold of old age, he begged permission of the Sultan to retire to his native village, and at the same time solicited a pension to enable him to live. The Sultan asked him if he had not saved any money. The man replied that, owing to his having had to support a large family, he had been unable to do so. The Sultan was very angry that any of his servants, and especially one in the immediate employ of his household, should, after so many years' service, say that he was penniless. Disbelieving the statement of the menial, and being determined to make an example of him, the Sultan gave orders that Hassan should quit the palace in the identical state in which he had entered it twenty-five years before. Hassan was accordingly disrobed of all his splendour ; and his various effects, the accumulation of a quarter of a century, were confiscated, and distributed amongst the legion of palace servants. Thus, without a piastre in his pocket, and dressed in the rude costume of his native province, poor Hassan began his weary journey homeward, on foot.

In time he reached the suburbs of a town in Asia Minor, and, seeing some boys at play, he approached them, sat on the ground, and watched them as they amused themselves. The boys were playing at State affairs : one was a Sultan, another

his vizier, who had his Cabinet of Ministers, while close by were a number of boys, bound hand and foot, representing political and other prisoners, awaiting judgment for imaginary misdeeds. The mock Sultan, who was sitting with dignity on a throne made of branches and stones, decorated with many-coloured centre-pieces, beckoned Hassan to draw near, and asked him where he had come from. Hassan replied that he had come from Stamboul, from the palace of the Sultan.

"That's a lie!" said the boy-Sultan. "No one ever came from Stamboul dressed in that fashion, much less from the palace. You are from the far interior, and if you do not confess that what I say is true you will be tried by my ministers, and punished accordingly."

Hassan, partly to participate in their boyish amusement, and partly to unburden his aching heart, related his sad fate to his youthful audience. When he had finished, the boy-Sultan, Ali by name, asked him if he had received his twenty-five years back again. Hassan, not fully grasping what the boy said, replied:

"I received nothing! nothing!"

"That's unjust," continued Ali, "and you shall go back to the Sultan and ask that your twenty-five years be returned to you so that you may plough and till your ground, and thus make provision for old age, the period of want."

Struck by this sound advice, Hassan thanked the boy and said he would follow his advice to the letter. In thoughtless mirth the boys then separated, to return to their homes, little dreaming that in the case of one among them the seeds of destiny had been sown in that half-hour's play. Hassan, retracing his steps, reappeared in time at the gates of the palace and begged admittance, on the plea that he had forgotten to communicate something of importance to his Majesty. His request being granted, he humbly solicited

that, as his Majesty had been dissatisfied with his twenty-five years of service, those twenty-five years should be returned to him in order that he might labour and put by something for the day when he could no longer work. The Sultan answered :

" That is well said and just. As it is not in my power to give you the twenty-five years, the best equivalent I can grant you is the means of sustenance for a period of that duration, should you live so long. But, tell me, who advised you to make this request ? "

Hassan then related his adventure with the boys while on his journey home, and his Majesty was so pleased with the judgment and advice of the lad that he sent for him and had him educated. The boy studied medicine, and, distinguishing himself in his profession, ultimately rose to be Hekim Ali Pasha.

He had one son who was known as Doctor Ali Pasha's son. This son studied calligraphy, and became so proficient in this art, now almost lost, that his imitations of the Imperial iradés (decrees) were perfect facsimiles of the originals. One day he took it into his head to write an iradé appointing himself Grand Vizier, in place of the reigning one, a protégé of the Imperial Palace. This iradé he took to the Sublime Porte and there and then installed himself in office. But as chance would have it the Sultan happened to drive through Stamboul that day, in disguise, and noticing considerable excitement and cries of " Padishahim chok yasha ! " (long live my Sultan) amongst the people, he made inquiries as to the cause of this unusual commotion. His Majesty's informers thereupon told him that the people rejoiced in the fall of the old Grand Vizier, and the appointment of the new one, Doctor Ali Pasha's son. On hearing this amazing intelligence, the Sultan returned to the palace and immediately

sent one of his eunuchs to the Sublime Porte to see the Grand Vizier and find out the meaning of these strange proceedings.

The eunuch was announced, and the Grand Vizier ordered him to be brought into his presence. Directly he appeared in the doorway, he was greeted with : "What do you want, you black dog ?"

Then turning to the numerous attendants who were about him, he said : "Take this nigger to the slave market, and see what price he will bring."

The eunuch was taken to the slave market, and the highest price bid for him was fifty piastres. On hearing this, the Grand Vizier turned to the eunuch and said : "Go and tell your master what you are worth, and tell him that I think it far too much."

The eunuch, who was very glad to get off, communicated to his Majesty the story of his strange treatment. The Sultan then ordered his chief eunuch, a not unimportant personage in the Ottoman Empire, to call on the Grand Vizier for an explanation. At the Sublime Porte, however, no respect was paid to this high dignitary. Ali Pasha received him in precisely the same manner as he had received his subordinate. The chief was taken to the slave market, and the highest sum bid for him was five hundred piastres. The self-appointed Grand Vizier ordered him to go and tell his master the amount some foolish people were willing to pay for him.

When the Sultan heard of these strange proceedings he sent an autograph letter to Ali Pasha, commanding him to come to the palace. The Grand Vizier immediately set out for the palace and, being received in audience, he explained to his Majesty that the affairs of the State could not be managed by men not worth more than

from fifty to five hundred piastres in open market ; and that if radical changes were not made, certain ruin would be the outcome. The Sultan appreciated this earnest communication, and ratified the appointment, as Grand Vizier, of Ali Pasha, the son of the boy who had played at State affairs in a village of Asia Minor.

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